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LECTURES  
ON  
BAPTIST HISTORY

WM R. WILLIAMS.



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# LECTURES ON BAPTIST HISTORY.



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ON  
BAPTIST HISTORY.

BY  
WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS.

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1.

JOHN THE BAPTIST,  
OUR LORD'S HARBINGER.



# JOHN THE BAPTIST,

## OUR LORD'S HARBINGER.

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THE introduction of Christianity into our world has been recognized by a modern French writer, who has discoursed upon society and philosophy, as being the greatest moral revolution recorded in the annals of our race.

Such estimate is the more remarkable, as coming from a scholar who is regarded as doubting the existence of a God, and who cannot therefore be charged as biased by religious prejudice in favor of the faith which he discerns to have been, and acknowledges frankly to have been, thus signally potent. M. Vacherot—for it is to him that we refer—has in glowing utterances presaged and depicted the future spread of democracy. Writing in the days of Napoleon III., he presented to France and to Europe our own people as the truest republic then on the face of the globe, and very distinctly does he attribute the prosperity, and even the very possibility of the existence, of free institutions amongst us to the influence of the Bible upon our nation. It is interesting, amid the acclaims of our national centenary, thus to hear the judgment of a foreign scholar, not a believer—his judg-

ment upon the sources of our strength and of our success, in achieving and preserving liberties, that, in so many other lands and through so many experiments made in former ages, have speedily or ultimately collapsed. Yet this same eulogist of our freedom looks forward to a time when our Bible shall be outgrown and superseded. From a foreigner thus free from patriotic partialities such as an American might feel, and chargeable with no traditional or professional leanings toward the gospel, we may accept gratefully so strong a testimony as to the high power of the Scriptures on national well-being; whilst we withhold our assent from his auguries as to the ultimate displacement of the volume from the school, the library, and the sanctuary. Admitting his analysis of the past, we fail to subscribe to his omens respecting the future.

The book which, scepticism itself being witness, has thus colored the history of our race, and moulded so visibly and so happily our own national career, is a volume of peculiar structure. It has an Old Testament and a New. Between the writing of the last portion of the older part and the composition of the earliest Gospel in the New, Matthew's, there intervened a chasm of nearly four centuries. This is a larger interval than yawns between our times and those of Christopher Columbus. During that long spasm of silence from Malachi onward no prophet appeared in Israel. Yet writings so remote in date of origin and in the circumstances of their writers, the two Testaments, one of them closing just when the Jew had emerged from his captivity to the Chaldean and



the Persian, and the other, the New, taking up the interrupted strain four centuries after, when the Jew had passed under the sceptre of the Roman; the book in Hebrew, whose last scribes had not so very long left Euphrates, in the far East, where their harps hung on its willows; and the book in the Greek, the earliest of whose penmen had been tax-gatherer under magistrates who came from the banks of the Tiber, in the far West,—these books, so dissevered in date of their origin, are by a divine wisdom wondrously made to cohere with each other in the closest interdependence.

Old English conveyancers, in preparing the record of the transfer of some important estate, drew up two copies of the same deed upon the opposite ends of one and the same parchment. Then the scrivener's knife severed the skin into two separate documents, by a line which was jagged like the teeth of a saw, or undulating like the hollows in the water of a lake rippling before the breeze. The old name "Indenture" survives to this day at the head of our deeds, when the old usage of actual "denting" or "indenting" has been generally abandoned. One party, the original grantor, kept the one copy; the other, the purchaser, retained the counterpart. Was there in after-times doubt as to the genuineness of the document, antique simplicity soon determined the doubt by laying the two indented portions of the one original vellum together. If tooth met tooth, if the indenture tallied without shrinkage and without overlapping, there was tangible, visible demonstration of the original unity. There was the same grain in the skin, and there was

exact coadaptation in the line of severance. The indenture stamped the genuineness. Now, in our Bible, the Old and the New are not bare verbal transcripts the one of the other ; but the same Divine Author who furnished both made the ancient to fit as by a line indented in divine exactness and symmetry into the New ; the wave in the low trough of it upon the one parchment meeting another wave in the answering crest of that wave as upon the other parchment, so that the two covenants thus authenticated showed the same Supreme Mind. It was a Mind, one in its several dispensations, and harmonious through all ages of the world's history. Prophecy, or "history in anticipation," responds to history, or prophecy become fact, across the two sides of a vast chasm ; just as, in the days of Joshua, Ebal pealed back to Gerizim and Gerizim pealed back to Ebal the alternate snatches of the same law, and the strophe and antistrophe swelled up together, praising the same Jehovah, Leader of their exodus and Giver of all their victories. Promise, warning, and unfinished history upon the one side, tallied with and matched fulfilment and retribution and completed history on the other side. "Comparing spiritual things with spiritual" is the apostle's enunciation, as to the rule of successful interpretation laid down by the Holy Ghost, the Inspirer of the entire record. Collate the origins with the results—lay the pledges of Eden and Sinai against the achievements of Bethlehem and Calvary—and see illustrated, as over the stormy tides of human commotion, and over the wide chasms of earthly centuries, the unity and inflexibility of him

who is in one mind and none can turn him, the Farsighted and the Infallible Sovereign who, amid the heavings of primeval chaos, saw distinctly the welterings of the final conflagration and the orderings of the last judgment. He, in this, his unity of purpose, which he had maintained through all varieties of utterance, and all relays of successive scribes, and all mutations in the outer form of his providence, had indented the Old Testament, so that it required and necessitated the New; and then, resuming, after the interval of a dozen generations of mankind, his unwavering, unforgetting scheme, he had indented the New Testament to supplement and to verify and to perfect the Old Testament.

Now, the very last sentence in the very last prophet of the Old Testament is such pendant fringe and indentation, awaiting and demanding a new advent and a novel herald, who shall usher in the steps of that grand and yet dread Visitant, the Hero of the expected advent. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." For four centuries had that banner of the long-expected Forerunner been hung, fluttering over the uttermost edge of the finished Hebrew canon. The Old Testament had, as regards the same harbinger, still earlier pendants hanging out. Not merely four, but seven centuries before, the day that Zechariah received the promise of a son, God had, by Isaiah, pledged that there should be lifted up the "voice of one crying in the wilderness" and

calling men to "prepare the way of the Lord." Let us endeavor, by nearer and more modern measurements, to appreciate the dignity bestowed, in these far-dated promises, upon John the Baptist, by those prophecies going so long before his birthday. No earthly prince, Plantagenet or Bourbon, ever had his cradle thus foretold for hundreds of years. More than four centuries separate us in our age from the times when Columbus turned his prow toward our continent. Supposing that God had by divine illumination prompted the Genoese to erect, when touching the rim of this western continent, a tablet describing the character and mission of our own Washington, how would the ancient oracle have shed a new and dread majesty over the career of him who led our fathers to freedom. Such, and even larger, was the interval between Malachi and John the Baptist. But a yet broader chasm severed John from Isaiah: this was a span of more than seven hundred years. Let us look back, from our homes and sanctuaries, to a period of modern history seven hundred years removed. We reach the times, in British and Syrian history, of the Crusades, of Saladin the brave Saracen, and of Richard Cœur de Lion of England; and in the history of the Anglo-Saxon people, whose blood so largely makes our national life, we find a little nearer yet, what to us ordinarily looks so far, the days of John and of the English barons who extorted from a craven and heartless monarch the glorious sanctions of Magna Charta—a document underlying so largely our ancestral liberties and laws. That was not full seven hundred years from us. Suppose that when Richard fought in Palestine or John

surrendered at Runnymede there had been erected a memorial, that the God of nations intended to bring about, in the far West and among a new people, the setting up of what we now see, a home of welcome for the exiles of many lands—a banner of hope for the rights of the long oppressed—a sanctuary for his own truth and his own Zion from the persecutions that hounded both in the old Europe so fiercely and so long,—how would a prophecy so long since recorded, and after the weary interval of ages so strangely and exactly fulfilled, make our country all the dearer and the holier—august, ancient, and sacred?

It is by such feeble illustrations from our own modern times that we can understand in some degree the peculiar honor put on John the Baptist. He was a prophet and—as the Master whom he heralded pronounced —“more than a prophet;” for no seer merely human, from Enoch to Samuel, from Samuel to Isaiah or Daniel or Habakkuk, had thus, four centuries—ay, seven centuries—before his cradle swung, been the subject of solemn and written predictions—predictions registered in the most venerable and sacred annals of the nation. But besides these there were, as to his great Master and Lord, pledges running back to Eden, when the serpent’s transitory triumph was, as God promised, to be followed by the birth of the Seed of the woman, crushing the head of the tempter. With the history of man’s blight was intertwined the covenant of God’s predestined balm. Abraham was to have not only a favored nation spring from him; but in him all nations, Gentile as well as Hebrew, were to be blessed. David was not only to have a sure throne, but ultimately a Divine



Progeny, whose should be an immovable kingdom. Hosea told of a time when Israel should have neither priest, ephod, nor temple, nor sacrifice. Moses, the leader of the Exodus, foretold a distress for Israel when the mother should in famine sacrifice her own babe, and told also of a prophet like unto himself, whom Israel was to hear as reverently, as they had heard him when yet fresh from the glories of Sinai, and when standing at the foot of the cloudy pillar out of which God's own voice spake. Isaiah told of the Lord's Servant rejected, yet suffering for the sins of others and by his knowledge justifying many. Bethlehem, the place of his birth; his kingdom, a stone cut out of the mountain without hands and towering to fill the earth and to shatter all other empire,—were predictions by Micah and Daniel. Upon how many tags and projecting indentations of the ancient record, had God required that the new history of the world, as his Messiah should shape and rule that history, was necessarily to fit, in order to show the identity of the authorship, and the eternal symmetry and immutability of the grand scheme of revelation and redemption.

Thus foreseen and indicated, not only before Herod had commenced his restoration of the existing temple, but before the heroic strife of the Maccabees and before the persecutions of an Antiochus, and before even an Alexander had led Greece over so wild and so wide a career of invasion and domination, before a Cyrus and a Nehemiah had rebuilt temple and city from desolation, and before even a Nebuchadnezzar had flung down fane and city into the desolation whence they were thus restored, anticipat-



ing the national ruin and the national recovery,—God had put upon the national annals his pledges, as to the work which John should do and as to the scene where this his servant should labor. As Isaac, the great stock of the national tree, had been the child of a long-childless home, born to a sire and a mother of great age, so was John born to Zachariah and to his wife Elizabeth. Not only had Isaiah and Malachi received commission to predict of the harbinger: but, as the hour neared, an angel, Gabriel, came down to announce the close approach of the long-predicted messenger of the Messiah. Although John himself wrought no miracle, yet, as Hume has well said, a prophecy is itself a miracle. A prediction precise and fixed, promptly and literally fulfilled, of what man could not foresee, of what man unaided could not achieve, is a miracle. In that light, the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi and Gabriel, culminating upon the head of the babe whom Elizabeth clasped as the child of her old age, made his birth in itself a transcendent miracle. Seven centuries before, four centuries before, and then, but in the very year, divine oracles, and in the last date an angelic messenger, stamped the infant's career as one on which the eyes of Heaven were intently fastened, and to which were summoned the eyes of God's elect people, not only in their native Palestine, but through all the far lands of the Gentiles into which exile and commerce and adventure had scattered the far-travelled Hebrew.

His childhood and youth were not idle, though they were comparatively lonely. He was in the deserts until

the day of his showing unto Israel. Nurtured in solitary communings with Scripture and with nature, and with God, the Author of both, he was of hardy frame and schooled in self-denial, simplicity, and endurance; his robe was of camel's hair; and his diet the rudest fare of the rude wilderness, "locusts and wild honey." But a prophet withal is he, of God's own rearing and God's own prompting.

Of this class of divine ambassadors, some were men whom God meant to make, by the written word, teachers of generations long after their own time. They were the prophets of the *pen*. Such was Isaiah, and such probably Habakkuk, in their main ministry scribes rather than heralds. For others, whom their Sender intended for direct and prompter results, and that they should arouse the multitudes of their contemporaries, a fitter designation was prophets of the *voice*. They might leave little of a permanent literature of their own composing, but they spoke face to face with their hearers, and lifting up their voice, as of a trumpet, denounced the crying sins of one age and announced the impending woes of the next age. As a man of kindred spirit, in Britain, long after, said respecting this very mode of rousing and mending society—it is John Wycliffe that we quote—"It was by preaching that he, Christ, conquered the world out of the fiend's hand." And as Christ himself, the Great Teacher, left no writing; his forerunner was preacher, not writer; a prophet, not of the pen, but a prophet of the voice. But why did he proclaim his message in the wilderness, and not, as did Jonah, in the streets and squares of the great

capitals, amid the hungry rabble and the crowding traders and the jostling pilgrims come to worship? The wilderness where he spoke, was not utterly desolate, but only sparsely settled. It lay in the line of travel both for traffickers and caravans and worshippers. And it allowed, which thronged metropolitan streets did not allow, opportunities for leisurely meditation. The attention, fixed on solemn themes, might be held there till it issued in right action. That desert, the scene of Joshua's incursions upon the Canaanites, and afterward of David's flights and raids and victories, with two seas, the great Mediterranean on the west and the Dead Sea on the east, the last sea sad and dark with its brooding memories of the eternal scar which God had in his anger there put on his own chosen land, where sin had been especially rife and fierce, with Sinai on the south, and Zion and Carmel and Hermon and Lebanon to the far north,—how did the environment lift the soul out of its ruts and summon it to solemn reflection on death and eternity and the inevitable judgment?

What was the burden? In part, of the Great Stranger whose goings forth were from everlasting, and who was soon to make in lowliness his long-expected appearance upon earth. That advent is rushing on. He, John, the herald of it, was to prepare the way of the Lord and make his paths straight. A nation that would profit by their Messiah must put away its idols. In part, the prophet's burden was to turn the thoughts of his hearers upon themselves. The times were out of joint; they needed a dire and deep wrench to bring them back.

They were called to repentance. The heart of the fathers was to be turned to their children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. Some read one of these phrases as a mere repetition of the other. But, in Hebrew parallelism, the second use of the same word is often an enlargement of the kindred but narrower thought contained in the first use of the term. When Christ said, "Let the dead bury their dead," the parallel was not a repetition. The first "dead" meant spiritually *dead*—men careless and ignorant of God, but having bodily life; the second "dead" meant those who had lost even this, and the new use of an old word described corporeal death, the stiff form of an earthly kinsman, out of whom had gone the last gasp and sob of an earthly life. So, in Malachi's phrase, the heart of fathers turned to children meant a recovered sense in the fathers of that generation as to their own social duties to households, to their own offspring, and to the wives and mothers in whose care the common progeny were especially left. As Josephus, their own historian, testifies, it was to Israel, as it was to their Roman masters and their Greek teachers, a time of great social profligacy. This might be rectified. When, centuries after, Rousseau launched the volume of the Social Contract, as he called it, in which he appealed to men, his neighbors, upon the rights and duties of society as founded upon a sort of mutual bargain and compact, he made an appeal that, as all thinkers allow, had very much to do in bringing on the great French Revolution. But he, as a writer, had his heart so engrossed with his compatriots and fellow-citizens, that it was hardened as a

father's heart against his own children; and he, the mender of the ways of nations, sent the offspring of his own life to the foundling hospital to be reared or to be slain by strangers, as the chance might be, in the savage heedlessness and heartlessness that has too often governed such institutions. John the Baptist called the Elis of his age not to overlook their Hophnis and their Phinehases. He would not have a David even, to rear by slovenly tenderness and criminal indifference Ammons and Absaloms for mutual hate and fratricide and parricide. He would carry home, as did Nathan to the paramour of Bathsheba, God's terrible ban against household sin.

John dealt with all social sins, wrongs of the rich to the poor, wrongs of the powerful to the feeble, and again of the feeble and dependent, in their envy and discontent toward their more opulent neighbors. Publican and soldier, Pharisee and Sadducee, all were summoned to repentance, each of his class-sins and his own personal misdeeds. It was an age in Rome and in Cæsarea and in Jerusalem of relaxed social ties. He preached the sanctity of marriage. The Herodian family had been especially reckless in this matter. Without fear and without favor, this herald of God came out of the desert in prophet's garb and with primeval sternness; the ascetic dares to put down, simply and rigorously, the requirements of the law of Sinai, unrepealed and irrepealable. To Herod he said, "It is not lawful to have thy brother's wife." That speech bred a grudge which rankled in the heart of the queen. Thus censured, Herod felt reverence and compunction, but anger and wounded pride as well.



But as we said, "children" and "fathers" had, by the law of Scripture parallelism, yet larger meanings in the second and recurring use of the old phrase. The most aged of John's contemporaries were, by descent or by intermarriage and adoption, the children of earlier generations. They were summoned to turn back, in their estimates of duty and virtue and freedom and blessedness, to the ancestral patterns and the memories of the Exodus, the law-giving, the temple songs of David and the temple structure of Solomon, and, yet behind these even, to the memory of Abraham, the father of the faithful, and of Enoch, who walked with God. A nation who aim to reform their households, the very seed-plots of national order and freedom and unity, must cultivate the memory of ancestral glories and of primitive innocence. The child of Adam must trace back his pedigree till it ends in saying that he is the handiwork, the child, and the servant of God. He may not forget, much less abjure, his Maker. If he must renounce all such high parentage, if he be sprung of the mollusk, how dare he devour, in cannibal greed, his ancestral oyster? If the ape were his sire, will he lift pistol to shoot the kinsman chimpanzee, or look derisively out of his parlor window, in unnatural contempt, on the antics of a poor relative, capering grotesquely to the music of a hand-organ and craving pennies on the sidewalk? Man, to be free and true and noble, must be kindly and reverent, and begin far back to make a genuine progress far forward. He may not forget Eden, and the Creator who placed Adam and Eve there. If of God's making, he must stoop to invite and accept



God's teaching and ruling. The great social problems of John's day and of our day must, to be rightfully solved, carry back the hearts of us, their children, to our remotest forefathers; and back of all ages, geological and astronomical, show us our origins. Woe worth the race if, in their science and their greed, they find no Maker and Heavenly Father at the head of the ladder along which they patiently or impatiently clamber, or down which they swing to find the worm and the protoplasm as their first parents at the bottom of the deep abysm!

John came, and Elijah, not, as the Jews of his day many of them ignorantly interpreted it, a transmigration—a return of the old prophet, who had worried Ahab's court and wrung Jezebel's heart, in his actual personalty. That actual personage did come down to the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses—the one the receiver and the other the restorer of the law—to glorify Christ. This identity with Elijah John denied. He revived no wild Oriental fable of transmigration; Elijah's self he was not. But as Christ explained it, he was Elijah in reproduced temper and in the reduplication of the old seer's fearless simplicity and rugged energy, just as Jefferson said of Nathaniel Macon, one of our own early Baptists, a statesman of his own party, that he was "the last of the Romans," not meaning that he, Macon, had Latin blood in his veins, or could, perchance, have held a Latin dialogue with an old Roman Brutus or Cicero had they returned to the earth, but that, in his antique sternness and dignity of character, he recalled the Cato and the Camillus, sturdy and upright men, who stood when

others wilted and crawled. Yet John was not a courtier wearing soft robes and sharing dainty meals. These were to be found in kings' houses. But in the desert was fitter haunt for a prophet and a seer of the old heroic and saintly mould of an Elijah, such as was John the Baptist. Thus was John an Elias in his mood and bearing. His generation had revered him as a prophet. Did he reciprocate the reverence paid him by courting and guarding popularity; and thus fear man? No. The Herod who sold him to death feared the chief estates of Galilee, who had heard his rash promises, and feared the scorn of the damsel who had danced with such dazzling gracefulness, and feared the imperious Herodias, whose affection had been the blight of his own household and palace. And when the poor homeless prophet quailed not, true as steel and unappeasable as conscience; on the other hand this prince, amid splendor and wealth and courtiers and soldiery, poor weakling as he was, feared, wavered, and broke down, and gave God's ambassador to a sudden and ignominious death. A craven may head armies and wield richest exchequers; and the martyr, who finds but the fare and garb and death of a Lazarus, may out-face and out-brave and out-live the despot that dooms him. As said the French Jansenist poet, Racine, long after, "Fear God, and fear none else." Thus did John.

But if God's appointed and long-predicted precursor, to besom the pathway for God's own only begotten Son, why is he, the man of Elijah's mould, not blessed in his departure from earth with such a heavenward wafting as Elijah received, and as had in antediluvian days been

accorded to Enoch, walking with God, and then missed of men, for God had taken him? Had not this son of Zacharias earned such fiery chariot and angelic escorts, bearing him to the Father's welcome on high? No. The higher dispensation needed to begin in a lower humiliation. It was enough that the disciple should be as his Lord. He had preached repentance and the remission of sins. How the last was to come—a true and large remission of sins—how the penitents whom he charged home with guilt, and summoned to an immediate and utter change, were to be pardoned and to receive absolution from their sins, he had intimated rather than plainly expounded when he pointed to the greater Prophet out of Nazareth. Was it with an allusion to the Passover victim, whose blood sprinkled on each returning year the doorposts of each Hebrew dwelling and recalled the dread night in Egypt when the angel of vengeance slew each first-born of the Egyptian homes, but spared and passed over the gore-bedabbled doors of their Hebrew bondsmen? Or was it also a reference to the daily oblation, yet nearer and more frequent, of the lambs presented in the temple in each day's sacrifices? John said, in one or both of these aspects, turning to his kinsman Saviour, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!" By abnegation and suffering, by the ignominious and agonizing sacrifice on Calvary, that great Prince was to become the Redeemer of the world. If the faith of the forerunner had for the time faltered in his own dungeon, or if, perchance, he sought only to reinforce, by personal conference with Christ, the faith of the disciples whom he

had sent on this message,—John had asked, “Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?”—simply and sublimely had the Christ responded, “Blessed is he who-soever shall not be offended in me.” The disciple who accepts meekly the Master’s cross and who prefigures right loyally and right fearlessly the Master’s tremendous and incommunicable agonies is “not offended.” In an early day, Elijah’s chariot; in the day of Christ’s approaching slaughter, the headsman’s block and the headsman’s descending sword, are a grander chariot for the second Elijah, putting him yet closer to his Prince. In the path of lowliness and loneliness and resolute endurance to the end, John was thus honored to win a higher distinction even than had been accorded to his great prototype and model, Elijah. On Carmel that stalwart and older servant had said, “If the Lord God be God, follow him;” and Israel had exclaimed, “The Lord, he is the God.” In the low dungeon of Machærus, when the har-binger bowed his neck to the flashing falchion that the daughter of Herodias and the craven fear of Herod had sent against him, the later prophet had virtually proclaimed again, “‘If the Lord be God, follow him.’ And follow him will I, though it be to a culprit’s death and with the dunghill of a Lazarus awaiting my headless corpse.” And he who afterward promised to the penitent thief beside his own cross a remembrance in his, the Messiah’s kingdom, had not overlooked, we may well believe, the welcome and the place of honor in that same kingdom for his fellow-sufferer and for his precursor, John the Baptist. And turning to the blended histories of both

servant and Lord, we the Christians of so many lands and so many centuries justify and congratulate the servant in his meek trust, and we magnify and confide in the Master in his unparalleled oblation, and we, too, take up the outcry at the foot of Carmel, "The Lord, he is the God." Yea, verily, then; yea, verily, now; yea, verily, for evermore. And the deeper his humiliation, all the loftier is his love, and all the surer the final victories and the compensatory glories of all the martyr-train who have preceded him or followed him to the sacrifice. The love, stronger than death, is glorified by death, as his saints confront and defy that terror.

As an expression of the repentance that he preached, John administered baptism in Jordan. Was it before known to the Jews? Scholars have been divided as to this. We think the weight of evidence to be that Jewish proselyte baptism was unknown before John's time. That it was before unknown seems implied also in the question from Jerusalem brought to him: "If not the Messiah, wherefore baptizest thou then?" He pointed to it, as commanded him by the Jehovah who had trained him for his work and now launched him upon his mission—the Jonah of a spiritual Nineveh and the Daniel to a race in spiritual captivity. When Christ, manifested as such by the same Heavenly Power that had sent the forerunner, applied also for baptism, John declined it, as if to administer it would imply inferiority on the part of the recipient of the rite to himself, the administrator. Christ insisted on it as needed "to fulfil all righteousness." It did not bespeak repentance as needed by him, but it



bespoke the perfect righteousness with which his voluntary humiliation was accepted and proclaimed—how he, the Prince, honored his servitor and that servitor's loyal proclamation and that servitor's legitimate ordinance.

But to the rest of its recipients John professed to give it as a baptism of the penitent acknowledging unworthiness and renouncing his sin; not as though due to them as a race, for he said to men of warring creeds but a common Hebrew nationality—to the Pharisee, who so accumulated and magnified tradition, and to the Sadducee, who rejected all tradition, and even excised much also of sacred Scripture; to the easy-going liberalist and rationalist on the one side and to the strict and bigoted ritualist and traditionalist on the other side—Alike you need a change of nature. The Abrahamic covenant will not lift you into the kingdom of Abraham's God. "Generation of vipers," bring forth fruits meet for repentance—a change you need that shall be thorough and radical. The axe, brandished in rightful severity, has not yet felled the tree which it threatens, but its keen, bright edge lies against the root of the tree. All national calamities and household sorrows are but the chippings and blazings of that "two-handed engine" which lies ready to smite once, and smiting once needs smite no more. And barrenness, if inveterate, is the seal of the inevitable burning. I, John, demand the repentance. It is the prerogative of another, now on his way, to give repentance and the remission of sins. I baptize you with water; but he gives the baptism of the Holy Ghost, creative and renewing. And if opportunity be wasted and warning be

spurned, then he sends the deluge of fire. The fruitless tree goes to the furnace.

Some scholars, and not of our own denominational affinities, have supposed that in pagan mysteries, eagerly sought and long and widely practiced, a purification by water and by blood had become familiarly known, as the emblem of a great change in character and soul and purpose, before John's age. Moses had found the ark in the pagan Egyptian ritual far more ancient than the day of his own adoption by the daughter of Pharaoh. He had continued this emblem in the Jewish economy, not as the loan of paganism, but as a memorial of patriarchalism, which paganism had borrowed and perverted, and which he rightfully reclaimed. Men like Melchizedec and like Job had preserved much, in Gentile lands and lineages, of patriarchal truth and history. The ark among such a people had been the emblem of the escape of the world's grey fathers, sons of Noah, in the days of the Deluge. It was a memorial of God-planned and God-wrought deliverance, of a provision of the divine grace riding triumphant over the wreck of a world weltering under the floods of a divine wrath. And as Moses honored the fragments of a patriarchal faith in transmitting and consecrating the Gentile ark, so might John, divinely taught, accept and reinaugurate the emblems of supernatural lustration in the old Gentile mysteries. If Satan, "the ape of God," as an old Father so justly called him, had used these fragments and splinters of the shattered old faith of the patriarchs for many most crafty and wicked purposes, God might snatch his own truths out of the gripe of the great

counterfeiter, and vindicate and re-establish in their primitive and celestial majesty the great, the primitive verities, that a flood of the divine wrath threatened an apostate and revolted race, that, even as an incensed vengeance of Heaven against earth had once poured Noah's flood, so was it now about to send its second and more dread instalment, the world's final deluge of fire. Meanwhile, as mercy framed the ark of Noah to ride the first deluge, so in the ark of Moses was seen the mercy-seat, the throne of the divine benignity, set over the tablets of the law, the embodiment of divine justice. And so in baptism, the penitent acknowledging that justice had rightfully let loose its flood of wrath, might yet hope and plead that mercy could now rejoice against judgment. For Christ was to die, the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world, by death foiling and spoiling him that had the power of death; and now by heralds and ordinances proclaiming hope for the lost, and pardon for the guilty, and the return of the exile, and the welcome of the prodigal. A repentance that wrenched itself loose from the old idols; a contrition that acknowledged the breadth of the law and the depth of man's despair as to any right of his own; and a trust that clasped in the God-given atonement its one and its sufficient hope, and a filial appeal that implored passionately the divine Spirit, freely promised and graciously outpoured,—such repentance, such contrition, such trust, such filial rush of a soul in its despair, “one alone to the ONLY ONE,” as an old philosopher phrased the soul's turning desolately to God,—all these feelings found striking expression when the



floods met over the bowed head of the disciple, whether that head so descended beneath the waters under the hand of the forerunner John or under the hand of the apostle. The proselyte thus and there stooped to the death of the old, and accepted in tears of glad faith the birth of the new—a new Master, a new life of service under the cross upon the earth, and a new life of unutterable joy through that Redeemer's resurrection, ascension, and mediation at the right hand of his Father—his Father and ours—in the world of higher gladness and fuller union, where patriarch and harbinger, and apostle and prophet, martyr and confessor, sit down together in the presence of him who, as the Lamb, is alike the Temple and the Sun of his New Jerusalem beyond these terrestrial scenes.

And both John the harbinger, servant of our Lord, and the Christ, John's Divine Master—each of them a prophet of the Voice—yet bid us alike not to neglect, but to ponder, the sayings of the prophets of the Pen. The forerunner appealed to the oracles penned by Isaiah and to the histories preserved by Abraham. His Divine Follower and Prince said, "Search the Scriptures; they testify of me." Some would claim great and paramount value for the voice of tradition, apart from the inspired and written Bible. The history of the churches and the nations, in the very case of John himself, illustrates significantly the snares and perils of such unwritten memory, enhancement, transfiguration, and distortion of the old utterances. In apostolic times, the beloved apostle, John, namesake of the harbinger, records—but whilst recording discoun-

tenances—the tradition then current of himself, that he, the son of Zebedee, was to survive in the body on the earth until the return of our Lord in his second advent. It is an early tradition, and, in an apostolical age even, many credited the tradition; but, as an apostolical hand testifies, old as was its date and wide as was its currency, it was a departure from the Master's actual words, and so was a figment. So, in the case of our theme, John, the son of Zacharias, the Lord's harbinger, has had for many years, and centuries even, a set of professed disciples, who, on the base of their own traditions, have called themselves disciples of John, and were known, to a recent time, as Zabians, but whose faith is really without a gospel and without a Christ. Tradition really floated them away from John and Christ. His real genuine disciples were content with their teacher's testimony, that he must decrease and his Lord increase; and like Peter and James and John, they left the harbinger, in order to swell the train of the Prince. Others of them, when Herodias had secured the martyrdom of their beloved instructor, buried the corpse and went and told Jesus. That Saviour testified that never had there been a greater prophet than was this, his own loyal forerunner; but he added, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Just as the flagman, bearing his red pennon in front of a railway train through one of our city streets, carries not one of the passengers or an ounce of the freight which the engine and cars have undertaken to transport. He is not in the line which they keep. His movement is on the feet of the steed which he backs; theirs is by wheels and cogs and

steam upon the rail. Yet the distinctness of the work does not argue the uselessness of the preliminary service. The last poor convert from heathenism that, on the faith of Christ's gospel, moved yesterday, under the Master's welcome, into the Master's heavenly kingdom, was "*greater*" while here in the body, in privileges, in the full amount of insight, and the clear foundations of hope given by a finished gospel, than the son of Zachariah, living in a less enlightened stage of God's revelations. But he was not "*greater*" in holiness or "*greater*" in his heavenly recompense than the illustrious harbinger. When Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot and orator, came to these shores, he was, in national privileges, outranked here by the ragged, unkempt, and untaught newsboy who jostled through the skirts of the pageants, and who was an American, whilst the illustrious visitor was an alien. In this sense the inferior in endowment and intrinsic worth and in enduring fame was yet the greater in immediate privileges and native citizenship. Such we suppose the force of "*greater*" in our Lord's use of the word regarding his herald and loyal martyr. He was outranked, in immediate privileges and in earthly instructions enjoyed whilst he was yet in the body, by multitudes of Christ's simple followers, who yet, in the world of greater elevation and fuller vision, acknowledged themselves far outranked, in grace and in reward and in massiveness of services, by the illustrious prophet whom a dance bought for the shambles, in order to fatten the grudge of a heartless adulteress, and to seal the craven weakness and the final perdition of the poor kingling

who played a more modern and meaner Ahab toward his truculent and glittering Jezebel.

Now, the existence of such misguided believers in tradition as the Zabians, that call themselves by the name of a prophet who would impatiently disavow and denounce them, is not the whole lesson against that error furnished by the story of John. A Scottish historian, Burton, not wanting in research or in acuteness, records it in the first volume of his work on the annals of his nation, that there are, in the different portions of Christendom, not less than eighteen heads of John the Baptist presented as inviting the reverence of the faithful. For each, tradition would lift up its testimony. Certainly there is little reason to believe in its asseveration as to any one of the honored relics. But if, to preserve unimpeached the honors claimed for an ancient and far-descended tradition, we accord equal honors to the entire number, in what a condition must the morning of the resurrection place Christ's harbinger. If he accept all, he will be more than rival to the Cerberus of pagan mythology; and will he not rank with Kalee, the popular goddess of Hindustan, who appears before her frenzied devotees with a necklace of human skulls swinging down to her girdle?

No. He who with such resolute sternness besomed away the ecclesiastical tradition of the Pharisee, and the rationalistic tradition of the Sadducee, uplifts for himself as out of his grave, with force all the stronger from these vagaries of human fancy and these wild contradictory legends of ecclesiastical tradition, the old and blessed memorial, "It is written." Not "It is currently re-

ported," "It is very widely believed," but, "It is written;" and a louder and more august Speaker takes up the herald's unfinished testimony, and his outgiving is this: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle of my word shall not pass away." It is the utterance of him who was Builder of both heaven and earth, and knows the exact number of all their constituent atoms, and the full date, precise to a moment, for their continuance and for their removal. It is the utterance of him who, as he is the Theme, so he is the Prompter, of all Scripture; whose blood bought us all; whose grace invites us all; whose word warns us all; whom John, having worthily served on the earth, serves now more earnestly and loves yet more reverently in the upper worlds of light to which his testimony and his example point us, that through the faith and patience of the saints we too may endure and overcome and attain. Thanks be unto God, who gave him the victory; and who will to us give, if we look to the Lamb whom he heralded, the sight of that common glory and a share for ever in all that unspeakable blessedness.

John the Baptist closes the Old Testament and opens the New. Christ, his Lord and our Lord, both begins the Old and rounds and shuts the New. The promised Seed of the woman in Eden just when sin entered it, he is the Light of the world and the Opener of that New Jerusalem into which sin shall find no entrance, sealing to his church a Paradise regained which shall never be forfeited; and as out of its gates he proclaims, "Whoso-

ever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." And from the harbingers and from the followers, the saints of all ages and all dispensations, comes the thunder of that one acclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

II.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD  
AS SET UP BY CHRIST.







# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

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THE time of our Lord's appearance in the world was one of general suspense, of widespread and intense expectation. Cæsar, in the person of Julius, the greatest of the name, had laid the foundations of an empire wider than Alexander's. Augustus, retaining cautiously the names and shows of the old republic, had given that imperial power inherited from his uncle the unity and consolidation and energy of an absolute despotism, varnished over with the memories and titles of a patrician aristocracy and of a plebeian democracy, which, though wearing their old titles and flaunting their old badges, did—more meekly than begrudgingly—their stipulated service in the pay and under the banners of a virtual autocrat. Old and independent kingdoms had become dependencies of this central empire. Peace had in a certain sense been secured, and the temple of Janus, at the capital, had its gates closed—a token of the rare event. But what was to be the result of the general submission when now no power, however remote, sturdy, or barbarous, seemed able to make head against the invincible legions of Rome? Was it the repose of a new and riper order, or the stagna-

tion and decay of a confessed imbecility and despair? Did it pledge the harvesting of a fresher life, or was it the torpor of corruption creeping into the vitals of the state and suffusing the nations with death?

How magnificent was the sweep of that Roman Empire, and over its broad domains with what a lordly supremacy did it set up and did it put down. A living English jurist, of high reputation and wide experience both in the Eastern colonies and home-schools of Britain, speaks, in his lectures on law, as if not loth to acknowledge the lights thrown on the history of civilization by the pages of scriptural prophecy. Sir Henry Maine mentions the Roman Empire as accurately described in the prophecy of Daniel: "It devoured, broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet." Its influence was marked, says the same writer, "by the comminution which it effected." "The Roman Commonwealth from very early times was distinguished from all other dominions and powers in that it broke up more thoroughly that which it devoured." Was it in its tremendous work of trituration prepared to give the unity and compactness of a new life, a legal symmetry, and a moral soundness to the peoples and tongues and societies which it thus ground into a compulsory assimilation?

The first Napoleon, with that massiveness of thought which distinguished some of his utterances, spoke of the Mediterranean as fitted, and as he hoped destined, to become a "French lake." Thoroughly, it seemed in the days of our Lord's advent, had the old Roman imperialism made this great inland sea to become merely a Latin

lake. The histories, the religions, the literatures, the arts, the commerce, and the navigation of all precedent ages had to a great extent gathered around its shores, its isles, and its havens. Just as in the huge amphitheatres which antiquity knew so well how to construct, tier rising on tier till the population of a whole city might find room on the benches, and thence might look down on the centre, which, by waters let in, was often made into a lake and the scene of a great mimic sea-fight,—so, as over a grander amphitheatre, did the empire survey that great inner sea washing so many lands. Over that old sea had scudded the builders of the Pyramids and the lords of old Etruscan soil—merchant-sails of Sidon, Tyrian fleets, and Carthaginian traders; the vessels of the old Argonaut in quest of the Golden Fleece; the pirate-keels of early Greece; the besiegers of Troy; the prows of republican Greece that won the battle of Salamis; Egyptian galleys; the ships of Tarshish; the keels of Alexander; and the Romans that won the great sea-fight of Actium. That old sea, upon whose blue waters looked down so many centuries and so many nationalities and kindreds and languages, imperial Rome, we say, seemed to have made her own home-preserve but a grander amphitheatre for the display of her vast resources and energies. From the Pillars of Hercules on the far West to the Bosphorus on the North-east and to the mouths of the Nile on the far South-east, none dared, upon all the outlined coast, to contest the power of the great Roman Empire. To the brooding eye of the poet it might seem as if the three great continents which made up the chief subjects of thought to the ancient world had

each, by its tutelary genius, sat down to bathe its feet in those azure waters. Africa and Europe and Asia, each with Roman collar on the neck and Roman fetter on the ankle, subjugated if not loyal, all looked up to the eagles of Cæsar as the symbols of a mighty and incontestable sovereignty. With what jealousy do modern nationalities watch the divided power over the same great waters. Britain is holding the western keys in Gibraltar and Malta, and eyeing France enviously as in her Algerine dependency she seems seeking to control the desert, or as she at the mouths of the Nile or by the Suez Canal threatens English communications with India; and forecasting anxiously the results should Russia replace Turkey at the gates of the Bosphorus, in the old city of Constantine. The shores thus parcelled out and begrudged by modern civilization were, in our Lord's day, all gathered under the rule of the one Cæsar.

But if outwardly the vast empire were at peace, it was not at rest. Augustus himself had felt the necessity of a moral renewal of the realm that he governed. Marriage had become discredited, and it was hoped by enactment and reward to make it again popular or unavoidable. The sovereign's own household was in such condition that the father's heart, as he turned to his own child, was saddened and stung within him. The legislator knew, that, if the old homes of Rome were not restored with something of their antique order and sacredness, Roman greatness must perish on its own crumbling and desecrated hearthstones. His only child, Julia, died in disgraced exile. Tiberius, who had submitted to a reluctant

divorce from a wife whom he loved, to become the husband of this imperial daughter, succeeded, as the recompense of this union, to the throne of his father-in-law, but upon the wreck, as it were, of his own household peace and honor. The Augustus who could subjugate an empire could not reform its households, or even guide wisely his own. And how ineffectual edicts and penalties and exiles were, to make the home secure and the conjugal union blessed, was illustrated in the very days commemorated in the Acts of the Apostles. The Claudius in whose times occurred the famine predicted by the prophet Agabus had, before reaching the purple, been twice married and divorced. When emperor, he was twice married again. Under the pressure of that scarcity of bread which Agabus had foreseen and which the charity of early Christians sought at Jerusalem to relieve, Claudius, in his passage through the streets of the metropolis, had been pelted with crusts of bread by the populace, who had learned to depend on imperial largesses for their sustenance, and who were provoked at the delay in the arrival of the expected supplies. When, at last, the long-desired keels from Egypt, the granary of the empire, had brought bread, this same Claudius selected, as one of the rewards for the mariners who had come up with timely and welcome supplies, the expressive and singular privilege that they should be exempted from obedience to the law of the empire making marriage compulsory. It was a ludicrous yet most lamentable confession, how the homes of the empire had become hopelessly forlorn and loveless, when bachelordom should be proclaimed as the emperor's



own singular recompense for the hardy voyagers who had fed the hordes of a famishing capital.

The great historian Tacitus has told us how general was the expectation of a great Deliverer from the East, who should set up an universal dominion. And the pages of the chief Roman poet, Virgil, a favorite of Augustus, had, in one of his eclogues addressed to Pollio, heaped on a child born to his friend images and anticipations of coming good, that the best critics now agree in supposing to have been derived from the phrases and pledges of Hebrew prophecy concerning the Messiah. Palestine, the land of our Lord's birth, was one of the outlying dependencies of the great pagan Empire of Rome. The God who, by Daniel, had foretold the growth of Latin imperialism and the peculiar force that it should wield in crushing its subject populations, had pledged the rise of a kingdom that, like a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, should become a great power and fill the earth. Not of man's shaping, it should defy and outgrow man's curbing. In the child that at Bethlehem was laid in a manger; in the youth that as an artisan aided at Nazareth in the workshop of his reputed father, Joseph the carpenter; but who had been proclaimed by his forerunner with such directness and solemnity as one taking away sin—the sin, not of Israel, but of all people; the guilt, not only that with which, under Ahab and Manasseh and Herod, Palestine had been drenched, but the sins of the outer Gentile world, not merely far as Tyre had discovered it, or far as Rome had conquered it, but to shores never reached by Phœnician keel, never overshadowed by Roman eagle,

over the entire globe,—in him God had prepared the offering of an oblation that could, in the energy of its efficacy, span all the continents and travel down the entire course of the world's centuries. This Deliverer was to be the moral Renewer, the mighty Conqueror, the Divine Redeemer, adequate to meet such a task, however cumbrous and complicated; to rise up to the dignity and vastness of an enterprise so blessed; but seemingly so hopeless, from the very extent of its compass and the countless multitudes of its perishing beneficiaries.

"The kingdom of God," said the Saviour at an early period of his ministry, "is within you; other legislators deal with the outer act, and visit with the corporal penalty, and can follow the refractory but to the scaffold and the tomb. I deal with the soul; I go to the root of the evil to be remedied in the stem and centre of the human character. Come from the unseen and eternal world, I wield its retributions, as I open its blessedness. Fear not those who can kill the body and find their puny power there all exhausted; but fear him who casts the soul into hell." Make the tree good, that its fruit may be good, is the philosophy of Heaven. The laws of the kingdom that he came to establish were spiritual, and the energies that he came to wield were not tangible and visible, to be counted on the ten fingers, and to be entered on tablets and in exchequer rolls. Sacrifice was the price of his own free boon to a guilty and ingrate race. Lifted on the cross, he would draw all men to him, but the love that made him willing at such a price to rescue his very maligners, blasphemers, and murderers, was a love that, when it was

kindled by reflection from him in their hearts, would make them strong to compassionate and brave to endure. They would become resolute and meek and glad cross-bearers in the train of a crucified Redeemer, and freely receiving would freely give. Continuing and deepening the work of his harbinger John, he by his Spirit turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, when he, in the very hour of his advent, taught by his prescient Spirit an aged Zacharias and an exultant Elizabeth, and a Simeon and an Anna in their feeble and decrepid isolation, to look hopefully toward the days of relief now begun for Israel and for all mankind; to see in cradles now tenanted converts and messengers, trophies and apostles, of him, the coming Hope of Palestine and of all the earth. When he took up little children into his arms; when he bade his disciples remember that those coming into his kingdom needed to come as with the docility and gentleness and submission of the infant, he inaugurated a new era for the childhood of humanity. And when, in near prospect of his own bitter and lonely passion, he turned to commiserate the women weeping, by bidding them look forward to those days of national woe and retribution, when the childless mother, now generally in Palestine so commiserated, should be rather felicitated and envied; when the infant in its captive mother's arms should be doubly forlorn in the desolation of exile, bondage, and penury,—how did he illustrate his own deep regard, and how did he by example inculcate a keen and special tenderness in the heart of the elder to the younger. So when, in the sermon on the mount, he expounded the spirituality



and breadth of the law, relieving it from the narrow, excising glosses of the Pharisees and vindicating the utterances of the old Scripture from the crippling and belittling rationalism of the Sadducees, how did he victoriously turn the hearts of the children of Abraham in that age to the sounder and fuller views of their earliest forefathers. When he expounded the law of marriage, carrying it back, beyond the indulgences and tolerations of divorce permitted by Moses, to the institution as it was in the beginning, when Adam and Eve walked the alleys of Eden under the eye of the Father and Maker, how did he vindicate the original integrity of the first and foremost institution of human society, from all the interpolations that had been made upon it by the weaknesses of man, and the relaxations of it by divine sufferance, allowing at certain times and for certain surroundings a remissness which was not to be permanent or universal, as it had not been the primitive and original type.

His forerunner had called to repentance. He proclaimed the remission of sins; and by parables of the greatest simplicity, pathos, and power, he bade the prodigal take heart, and the outcast to look with penitent hope upon the celestial home and the parental heritage which he had wilfully forfeited, but which a Divine Father was willing yet to reopen. The publican and harlot, the dregs and off-scoured scum, so to speak, of all human society, he does not seal to despair; but his readiness to instruct and recover the very classes upon whom the hypocritical Pharisee had branded utter reprobation was one of the very reproaches his enemies flung on his character, when

it marked him, in reality, as the true Rebuilder of the moral desolation that strewed with ruins contemporary Hebrew society. Not upraising this refuse of the commonwealth to license and impunity, but encouraging them to contrition and recovery, he showed himself thus, indeed, the Refiner that early seers had portrayed for their coming Messiah—one who could out of the refuse-heaps bring forth the true silver. As he had made a Manasseh in the old dispensation an exemplar of his bounteous grace, so in this his new dispensation a Magdalen was the herald of his resurrection, and she, out of whom had gone seven devils, now saw the vision of the angels who guarded the vacated sepulchre and witnessed of the Lord, as being on his way to a victorious ascension. The lever of a new-found hope was put below the sunken courses of the Hebrew Commonwealth. The opening of the prison-house to those spiritually bound was part of his prerogative; and the earnest of his joyous triumph, as Destroyer of the power and kingdom of Satan.

Among the thronging rabble that hooted him on his way to the cross might have been some, then in their childhood, who in the days of their manhood writhed in agony upon the crosses which Titus, when pressing close his siege of the fated city, planted in ghastly lines about the Hebrew capital. If impenitent mothers of these impenitent Jews survived to behold the fulfilment of Christ's rejected warnings, how, amid their keenest and most rancorous despair, must there have come back even to their souls some sense, that the far-seeing Christ who had, so many years before, felicitated the barren and child-

less wife, was as kind in sympathy as he was piercing in his divine forecast. Out of the deepening gloom of his own impending passion he had foreseen, and he had pitied the woes of the nursling in the days of the Roman siege, and the pangs of the frightened and famishing and captive mothers on whose necks those puny nurslings clung. Eyes, that had been dimmed with the bloody sweat of Gethsemane but a few hours before, could bend compassionate glances on the maternal hearts that were to be wrung, when the Latin siege-lines should surround the Hebrew sanctuary.

But he, thus divine in knowledge, in compassion, in stainless holiness, and in miraculous powers, is an Oblation. But he is Priest as well as Victim, and, gone up on high, he pleads, in the most high and holy place of his present celestial exaltation, the cause of his people. He is Prophet; and in his own fresh prediction, and in his symmetric and unexampled accomplishment of the older prophecies, that from earliest days had gone before concerning him, how had he set himself, not only before the nation, but also before all Gentiles, as the Desire of all nations, the Prophet and the Helper and the Teacher of all people.

John the Baptist had confined himself to the Jewish nation in his ministry. The greater Prince also, for whose way John prepared, limited his immediate ministrations generally to the seed of Israel. But in his expositions, at the synagogue, of Elijah's errand of mercy to the Gentile widow of Zarephath, and of Elisha's miracle of healing for Naaman the Gentile soldier and ruler; in his refer-

ences to Jonah and to Daniel, each of these great seers laboring partly for, and largely amongst, other than a Hebrew population,—how had our Saviour brought forth into clear prospect the purpose which he cherished of making the gospel of his kingdom to be glad tidings unto all nations. Reappearing after his resurrection, he had declared that all power in heaven and in earth was given into his hands, and that his truth was to be preached to every creature. A heaven-wide benefit demanded a world-wide testimony.

In all this how signally, yet how unexpectedly to his own countrymen and even to his own apostles, did he fling down in his new empire the old barriers of exclusiveness, the middle wall of partition between the uncircumcised heathen, and the children of Abraham with the rites of the law sealed upon them. And how did he illustrate the breadth not only, but the bounteousness, of the new kingdom. It was not for his own kingly lineage or for the tribe of Judah; for the learned, the wealthy, and the mighty: his gospel was pre-eminently for the poor. In the imagery of the Apocalypse, the roll which the angels were not adequate to open and read, and which the Lamb only was competent to free from its seven prisoning seals, was written, as the apostle says, not only within, but on the outside as well. The classical antiquarian tells, how the rolls of ancient ages sold in the booksellers' stalls were, when intended for the affluent, written on parchment and only upon the inner side; but cheaper copies of the favorite classics, demanded for students of narrower means, were on rolls of paper, and the writing there was

not only upon the front of the roll, but upon the back as well. A volume of this character, whatever its seals and its Divine Holder, was, from this aspect of the lines inscribed on it,—without as well as within,—denoted by that single feature, as being the contribution of a new and divine literature, not for the select and affluent and luxurious few, but for the multitudes whose longings after knowledge poverty could not repress. The classic of the skies was to be edited for the masses. Philosophies and inquisitions might seek to hold it back; but God's book challenged the hungering eyes of the multitude. As into the world of light, our Divine Teacher carried this emblem of his benign thoughtfulness for the vast masses, just as he had said, when his harbinger John from Herod's prison inquired for new credentials of the mission of the Emmanuel; and he, the Divine Enfranchiser, put as the crown and culmination of all his evidences this, that the poor had the gospel preached to them.

The poor rabble of Rome had from their pagan lord their doles of bread and their games in the amphitheatre. They saw the wild beasts tear each other and the gladiators stab one another; and, hungry for human gore, they howled in gladness over the large provision an emperor, chary of his own blood, but profuse in shedding the blood of his victims, provided for the imbruted populace of Rome in the circus. When an Augustus died, one of his supple courtiers asseverated, that he had seen the spirit of the deceased ruler mounting to the skies; and so the obsequious senate voted the deceased emperor a god. With armies, and navies, and treasures, and laws, and



magistrates, and largesses, and games, all at their command, why should not Rome's pagan emperors, thus voted into a godhead, set up a permanent, a world-quelling dominion? Human nature in its baser promptings and instincts was all on their side. The literature and poetry and oratory and philosophy of the age were all in their pay. If old powers bore continuous sway, is there any doubt that pagan Rome, backed by an impenitent Judaism, by a temple that cast out the Heir and Lord of that temple to be slain, strong under Sadducean and Pharisean guidance, with its cry of "Crucify him!" against a new claimant for universal royalty,—is there, we ask, any doubt, that pagan Rome in its imperial might, thus seconded by an impenitent Judaism, must crush the new faith, and this Claimant of a heavenly kingdom, into obscurity and irremediable defeat? Is not all secular might, thus banded, sure to triumph over the fishermen and tent-makers that claim, unarmed and poor, to announce everywhere the reign of this Man of sorrows, returning as Judge of quick and dead? Meanwhile, these strange heralds announce, that, in his grave, the second remove from a cross, there lies the only hope of the race for renewal and life everlasting. The poor, the denounced, the prisoned, the tortured, the martyred, went everywhere attesting that this King of Israel met all earth's real necessities and aspirations—was the Desire of all nations. Call him rather, the world might scoffingly respond, the Scorn of all people. The vilest contumely, now gathered on the images of halter and scaffold, then was grouped as intensely on the cross, accursed to the Jew, and to the

Roman so odious that the most abandoned culprit, if of Roman citizenship, was accorded some less forlorn and villainous a death. But they who follow him have counted the cost, and are ready to tread in his footsteps their own meek, resolute way to the cross. Who will follow, at such risks and against such odds, the Claimant that says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," speaking as from a gibbet whence his disciples had so recently lowered his lifeless corpse, speaking as out of a tomb where enemies had but lately sealed him, and as they thought effectually and finally quashed his mission?

A great company will be his believing disciples, and eager witnesses to his recovered life and his experienced grace. Priests, who had once hounded the rabble to extort from the reluctant Pilate the consummation of the sacrifice, will become themselves obedient to this faith, a great company of them recanting their blasphemies, and adhering to the faith of the maligned and excommunicated Nazarene. A Nicodemus and a Joseph of Arimathea, out of the very Sanhedrim, will show their adhesion to his cause. A Saul fresh from the school of Gamaliel, and from the scene of a Stephen's martyrdom, will become a convert and an apostle. And the story of Jerusalem and the Jewish people, as Josephus wrote it, their siege and their overthrow and their dispersion, will blaze forth the working of a divine power, to show the truth of the warnings which this rejected Prophet had delivered. A pagan Rome will come to accord, however reluctantly, its testimony to the same inexplicable foresight and unerring prevision, in his foretelling the fates of

the church as he had built it. No power in the cabinets and camps of earth, no power couched in the gates of hell, has proved able to withstand this King's edicts, and to falsify the pledges of this strange Potentate, emergent from the sepulchre and preaching immortality as from its dark shadow.

The history of Roman imperialism has been written in the days of its decline and fall with signal ability and great research, by an infidel scholar of Britain. Gibbon has endeavored to show, how causes merely human account for the overthrow of Paganism, and the triumphant diffusion and general reception of the new faith. But his reasonings have not, to the candid and dispassionate, seemed adequate or self-consistent. A Scotch jurist, Lord Hailes, of acuteness and erudition, promptly replied to the inadequate explanations of the sceptical historian. Christian scholars like Guizot, the eminent French statesman, not long since departed, and like Milman, the English poet and theologian, have to their several editions of Gibbon appended notes and comments explaining, at less or greater length, the insufficiency of the evasions which Gibbon employs to sheathe the force of Scripture prophecies, and to lessen the wonders of Christ's new and spiritual sway. In days yet more recent, the Comte de Champagny, a French scholar and statesman, son of one of the ministers of state to the first Napoleon, himself a devout Romanist, has presented the story of the closing days of the Jewish State and of the earlier ages of the Roman Empire, with a thoroughness, a vividness, and an eloquence, that stir the reader's soul. This work it is, prob-



ably, that has procured for him the honor of an admission to that eminent literary body, the great French Academy, whose membership is among the foremost distinctions of all modern scholarship. As a very decided Ultramontanist, he cannot carry with him in some of his views and conclusions the sympathy of his Protestant readers: but in a presentation of the inner constitution of the Roman imperial State, of its modes of enveloping and adopting the cities and peoples that it conquered, of Paganism sick to the death, and Philosophy unable to palliate the social evils it must confess, it is a book of great merit, and deserving close study. We have nowhere else seen a statement of the gradual interpenetration of the Roman literature and the Roman jurisprudence and the popular philosophy of the Empire, by the principles of the gospel, that approaches, in fulness, in clearness and force, this work of De Champagny, well worthy of an English version by some competent and faithful scholar.

Into the catacombs—places of burial, but of shelter also—went the hunted and proscribed followers of the Nazarene, and out of these catacombs the confessors of this faith one day emerged, to see the Empire awed and many of its nationalities won, by the spiritual doctrine which once these Gentile rulers had endeavored to consume by martyr-fires, and to drown out in the blood of its hapless proselytes.

Now, what had been Daniel's imagery of this great and widespreading power? It was not to be some statue, like the figure seen in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, bespeaking the sculptor's toil of hand and the critic's educated eye,

and exhibiting, it might be, all the symmetry of art. Like the unhewn stones of the first altars of the Mosaic economy, without mark of graver upon them, it was to be a growth, and not a fabric; heaven's boon, and not man's device.

So the Spirit of God, working when and where he would, had made, on the one side and on the other, this truth to take hold on fresh converts and win new accretions of proselytism, until, insensibly, the rock became a cliff, and the cliff a towering mountain-range, that commanded the regard of every eye, and crossed the path of the most heedless and unobservant traveller.

But if Christ be a king, what are his prerogatives as a monarch? Now, earthly governments are generally regarded in their threefold arrangements as to the legislative, the judicial, and the executive power. Under certain forms, and by assemblies or counsellors chosen or deputed to the end, the laws are framed, amended, enlarged, or revoked. The Parliaments of our British kinsmen, and the Congresses of our own country and people, are the depositories of this law-making power to the Anglo-Saxon race. To judges, of longer or briefer tenure of their office, is committed the power of interpreting and applying these laws to the various cases respecting which they may need explanation and adaptation. But to the judge a free country is jealous of allowing any direct or large share in the law-making. The executive, though the minister of the law, is himself amenable to the legislator and the judge, yet in certain posts he may be their equal or superior in dignity. The constitutional republic depends for

its perpetuity and success on the harmonious and uncolliding interaction of these great depositories of power, the law in its making, the law in its uttering, and the law in its enforcing. No republic but must fail, as old republican Rome failed centuries ago, if its town slums usurp and absorb and intermingle these distinct branches of government; and the rabble of yesterday arrogate to make the law of to-day, with no certainty that it shall please them to regard it as the law of to-morrow. A kingdom of human administration, we dread as liable to corruption and revolution. But a kingdom, if divine and in the hands of an Infallible and Undying and Omnipresent King, everywhere near to the cry of his petitioners, and every hour wielding an omnipotence that neither stumbles nor tires, is the more blessed for its subjects, and the more perfect in its character, when its legislation and its judgment are grouped into the hands and heart of one Potentate, the Lord God Almighty.

We read the New Testament, and read it as collated with the Old, its precursor. In its imperfect and fragmentary measure, the elder book is the counterpart and earnest of the newer. its complement and its crown. And there, in the indented and corresponding portion of each record, we find Christ the one Lawgiver. And no gathering of men, however august or venerable, as synod or as council, has right to add as legislators one jot or one tittle to the law-book as the apostles and the prophets left it. So ripe a scholar, and so staunch a churchman, as the great Archbishop Ussher, said to Richard Baxter, "Councils are not for government, but for concord." So, as

to judicial power, we suppose the canon laws, as men style them, to be the voluntary adjudications of those to whom the Master has in his oracles left no such authority. We dispute and repudiate their judgment. As to the executive power, we find God in his book setting up the congregation, a local assemblage of true disciples and their pastors, as servants to him, the present Ruler of Israel, and as, under him, office-bearers, watching spiritually over and for each other. They go safely only as they implore the Spirit's guidance and as they apply the Scripture teachings. To the end of the world, the King has pledged his presence with his people in the assemblies that number but their two or their three. Trusting in his veracity and invoking his fulness of counsel, they cannot fail. What is their safeguard? Not the unity of a great human ecclesiasticism, not the unity of some provincial or national convocation, but the "UNITY" of the "SPIRIT." The Paraclete, who cannot deny himself, boundless in resources and covenanted to take of the things of the Father and of the Son in his divine immutability and infallibility, overspreads all the jostlings of the schools and clasps together all the wide chasms of the centuries. An Augustine's Confessions, a Pascal's Thoughts, a Bunyan's story of the pilgrims, or his graphic tale of his own vivid experience in "Grace Abounding" meet yet an answering throb and waken the pulses of a heaven-lit sympathy in the readers whose own earthly training has been, it may be, under widely dissimilar institutions of human origin. The one Spirit weaves his bond of peace across the hurtling warp and woof of mor-

tal dissonances and earth-born controversies. Through Christ, the ONE WAY, the children of many various civilizations, with skins blanched by arctic frosts or blackened by the tropical heats, subjects of political despotisms or self-governed in political democracies, have access in common to one Father, and breathe in blessed anticipation the airs of a common Paradise awaiting them, when the death-day shall have ended the exile and gathered in the household.

It was the grand and kindly purpose of the Monarch who is also the ransoming Elder Brother of his people to commend the statute-book of his laws and judgments to their reverence, their credence, and their diligent study, by giving it the name, variously rendered, of covenant and testament. Take it in the sense of a covenant or solemn compact, it is the league, sacred and mutual, of the King of saints with all his vast flocks of the various centuries. It is a covenant, according to the imagery of this volume, ratified with blood. Abraham, father of the faithful, entering into covenant with his God, had for himself to pass, and the Maker who entered into pledge with him went, by the symbol of a smoking lamp—Divine Grantor and human grantee—both went between the severed portions of a slain victim. The covenant was ratified by sacrifice. And when the Redeemer on the cross was giving up the ghost, the great inner veil of the temple, with its lofty webs of gorgeous tissue and thick stout folds, was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, as if the indwelling Jehovah, before hidden in remote seclusion, came out to attest the nearer, clearer manifes-



tation of his nature and character; and that into the Most Holy Place was now given free access, not as before to priest only, but to each worshipper as well. As the apostle phrases it, a new and living way was thus opened for us. We were made kings and priests to God by a new and loftier consecration, and we may not forego, we may not forget, this covenant through which the Father, God, thus came out to be nearer than ever before to us, and through which we, the worshippers, come near unto him, the Father. The blood of that oblation bedews the volume from Genesis to Malachi and from Matthew to John's Apocalypse. The cross tore down for evermore that veil.

But take the term in the sense which others prefer giving to it. It is a testament, a last will, reciting the final and unamendable instructions of a Brother who has bequeathed a pardon here and eternal life hereafter. It was of necessity that the Testator should die ere the instrument could obtain its validity. Has he really shot the gulf and taken hold on the immortality beyond? The Fall of Jerusalem responds no less than the scenes of the crucifixion and resurrection. The Jewish people had, a few years earlier than the time when the old fane of the Hebrew went down in blood and ashes before the battering-rams and the torches of the Roman, invoked, as in a solemn moral suicide, by their high priests Caiaphas and Annas, by their Sanhedrim, by their populace filling the lanes of Jerusalem and demanding the crucifixion of their King—had implored deliberately the adjudication of Heaven, as between the nation dooming this Sufferer and the Sufferer whom they had so doomed, so assured

were they of his guilt and of their own innocent indignation as being a holy zeal—had invoked and implored that the blood of their Victim should rest on them and their children. The invasion of the Gentile; the devastation of their land and the erasure of their sanctuary; their long exile from the place of their ancestral offerings and sacrifices; their wide dispersion from the one spot where God had set in that dispensation his name—are a terrible response of the divine Nemesis to the fearful appeal which then and there they had made, and a very significant endorsement that the Lord of the vineyard had not disowned the Son and Heir whom these, the keepers of that vineyard, thus undertook to repudiate and to condemn. Like the earlier Abel's blood bringing down Cain's mark, the gore of this blasphemed but redeeming Abel is yet crying across the ages to the Justice above. As the English jurist, Lord Erskine, one of the greatest and acutest of their advocates, has said, the dispersion of the Jewish people is among the most convincing evidences of the truth of Scripture.

A covenant over the severed Lamb of God, a testament sealed with the blood of the generous and loving Elder Brother, the Bequeather as well as Earner of its legacies, has indeed the highest claims as the law-book of God's people henceforth; its statutes not to be enlarged, amended, or retouched; its judgments to be accepted as perfect in equity and wisdom; and the legatees and the covenanters recognizing in no human authority the competency to revoke or to revise the arrangements God has thus indited.

This kingdom faces the mythologies and the philosophies and the governments of the race. It claims per-



petuity of dominion and universality of acceptance. The Christ confronts the world's other masters. Which of them shall withstand him successfully? or which present a plausible claim to replace the Man of Nazareth as the Light of the world and the Judge of the eternities?

III.

BAPTISM AND REGENERATION.



## BAPTISM AND REGENERATION

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As into the sliding tubes of a telescope, narrow as they may seem, are yet compressed the prospects of the furthest fields of heavenly space which man's eye can reach, so it may be said that into three words of no very great length are shut up the entire hopes of our race for both worlds. For the relief of the lone, forlorn sufferer, and for the elevation and betterment of the corrupted and degraded masses; to make oppression impossible and to bring wars to an end; and to banish ignorance and pauperism and vice, all sorrow and sin, from our globe, how have statesmen schemed and sages pondered and patriots toiled and martyrs bled. The wail of Need and the shout of Hope have seemed to unite in that word, Reform. But obvious and unquestionable as may have appeared the necessity for reform in our neighbors, it has been hard to convince ourselves that Reform needed to make its knocking heard at our own door. The man with the beam darkening his own eye has officiously been seeking to remove from his neighbor's eye the mote, as our Lord's gentle sarcasm paints it. Legislators have devised reforms in law, and socialists have projected vast reforms in the innermost layers and most sacred bonds of society. A Lycurgus has bequeathed his iron reforms to Sparta; an Augustus, in

our Lord's own time, has inaugurated what seemed his golden reforms in the vast imperial domains of Rome. But how limited was the scope and how superficial the impression made by reforms that have come from the ruling classes down upon the subject masses of the population. In Jewish history, how soon after a Joshua had been laid in the tomb or an Elijah had been caught up into the clouds of heaven have the old evils recurred, and the vows of grandsires been forgotten in the revels of their grandchildren.

To make that word reform potent, the great Father and Ruler on high has seen it necessary to show behind it the shadow of a more portentous word, Revolution. When saintly seers could not divorce the Hebrew people from their unworthy craving for the idols of the Gentiles, God called in those heathen whose foul deities these his own people had coveted, to be the inaugurators of a revolution that taught the ingrate tribes, in captivity, impoverishment, and oppression, the infatuation of their choice and how ruinous the exchange had proved. And so, in modern times, when a nation would not otherwise learn or practice reform, God has let loose upon them the interior forces of class hatred, or, from beyond the national boundaries, the greed and ravin of some powerful invaders. And in British history some of the greatest and most successful of statesmen have been those who heard in season the tramp of a coming revolution; and averted it by such change of measures as calmed discontent, appeased the strife of parties, and inaugurated a partial or a widespread amendment. In the days of the later

Stuarts the people of Cornwall, a stalwart race, then known to be hardy and fearless both as miners and as wreckers, heard that the chief of one of their own noble families—a Trelawney—was in danger, at London, of losing not only his freedom, but his head. They organized their masses, and the county resounded with the rude refrain—

“And shall Trelawney die? and shall Trelawney die?

Then thirty thousand Cornish boys will know the reason why.”

And these omens of a revolution that might burst forth were among the influences, as was thought at the time, that aided to obtain for Trelawney and his fellow-prisoners their speedy discharge by jury and judge. In our own days the Reform Bill, as it was called, establishing a more general representation in Parliament, and the Catholic Emancipation Bill for Ireland, were both regarded as necessities, quenching by timely concessions widespread discontents, that might else have flamed out into revolutionary excesses. In our own national history it was to methods of this high and extraordinary class that our fathers resorted when they severed the ties of colonial dependence on the mother-country. When France, with vast masses of wrong to be redressed and wild hopes of amendment and enfranchisement proclaimed, but understanding not man and fearing not God, rushed into her great Revolution, whatever the evils that she corrected and the wrongs that she avenged, yet how much, too, she suffered and how vainly, and what ravages she blindly committed at home and abroad. After empire and monarchy

and republic, each twice tried and twice renounced with fickle restlessness, how difficult is it even yet for jurist or for philanthropist, for ruler or for voter, to determine where and when and how the reform may be made genuine, thorough, and permanent, and thus revolution be effectually stayed. The communist and the absolutist each would have his methods adopted; but, like the squirrel shut in its ever-revolving wheel, after all the din and the whirl of the varied experiments the bars remain, and the citizen often feels himself cooped up at the last revolving, neither free nor safe nor content.

For great as is Reform and dread as is Revolution, a third word was launched on the world centuries ago, yet greater in significance and surely and only blessed in its workings. That word is the utterance of the Christ whose it was to set up the kingdom of God in the world. It is Regeneration; it contains in itself the pledge of a reform that shall be thorough and enduring. It is the first stir of an avalanche-revolution that shall travel with augmented might and with ever-growing massiveness adown all the centuries, and on for the obedient beyond the judgment-day into the far and blessed eternities, and for the disobedient into exile boundless and hopeless. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. It is within you, its seat in the renewed heart, its aims lifted heavenward, and taking its hold on the brother's heart of the Incarnate Christ and on the throne of the Everlasting and Omnipotent Father.

Ye must be "born again" was his, the King's, exposition of the first principles of his rule to the startled and



perplexed Nicodemus. By an agency invisible as the air, but, though untraceable in its origin and its issues to the bodily eye, felt and heard in the oracles it uttered and in the new principles and feelings it infused; by the Spirit, omniscient and unerring and omnipotent as on the dawn when it wrought out the present creation of our globe,—were men now to be made over again. It was to the reproach of this earthly doctor in the Sanhedrim, receiving and arrogating the honors of a master in Israel, that he did not lay to heart the old lesson which had been recited afresh in his ears and passed anew over his own lips every time that in synagogue or in closet he had read, had listened to, or had uttered the prayer of the Psalmist king, “Create in me, O God, a new heart, and renew a right spirit within me.”

Let men philosophize and refine as they will about the processes, there was the principle recognized wherever a holy man of either one of the earlier dispensations, patriarchal or Levitical, had walked with God. Such unison and accord could not be until the human spirit worshipping and the Divine and Worshipped One were brought into one mind. He who shed his creative energies to brood over chaos when Eden was framed, presided yet over the outbreaking and upbuilding of his own renewed image in the lapsed and chaotic soul of man. God in his providential kingdom had ruled over all precedent ages of darkness in the world’s annals. Now he was to set up more manifestly his own empire, brushing aside earth’s particolored and shattered dominions, and smelting down into true purity and unity a church that should gather

the many-tongued Gentiles and rule all the far future of the world's history. Reform of the grandest, for it went into the roots of the character; revolution of the widest, for it altered the man's relations, not merely to his fellows, but to his old tempter and despot, Satan, and toward the true and recovered Father on high—a reform that accomplished changes which the ethics of earthly moralists and the speculations of Eastern and Western sages were alike incapable of projecting, much less incompetent to achieve—a revolution that should ultimately beat earth's swords into ploughshares and make the Britons, once the stupid slaves over whose incapacity as household helpers and whose cheapness in the market a Roman orator could with serene scorn dilate, the heirs of a civilization beside which the vaunted Latin valor and the Greek wisdom and the old lore of the far Orient were to look poor. Such reform and such revolution was the Nazarene to make the grand hope of the race in the regeneration which he proclaimed to be his indispensable requisition for the citizens of his new empire, but the bestowment of which he made free to all who honestly asked it. If earthly parent gave good gift to his child, though the parental hand outstretching the gift were soiled with grime or were red with slaughter; if men, being evil, yet retained sufficient tenderness to give good gifts to their children,—much more would the Father on high, only and evermore good, give the Holy Spirit without mistake and without counterfeit to all men who asked it of him.

The evangelist John is, we believe, now very generally

recognized as writing to fill up the voids left in the three earlier Gospels by a fuller recital of our Lord's teachings. In the first sentences of this apostle's Gospel we are told how the Light making its entrance into the world was yet disowned and refused, in his incarnate manifestation, by the race who were his own handiwork, and by the Jewish people, who were the chosen depositories of his prophetic oracles and his regal pedigree and his world-wide title-deeds. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But when the chief builders thus disallowed and rejected the chief Corner-stone of the spiritual fabric which Heaven was to rear as the final fane for earth's worshippers and the crowning dome of all human aspirations, this very refusal by the human builders was the seal of predestined identification on the part of the Divine Architect. By every page of prophecy, every offering, every prayer, that had gone up, were the nation and their ritual and religion all "his own." "His own received him not." Aaron's line would not veil mitre in his honor; Herod's mongrel progeny had no purpose to grant this peasant from Nazareth an inch on the lowermost steps of the throne which they had usurped from David's true descendants; hoary scribes muttered, with Isaiah's warning placed as under their gray eyebrows, "We hide our faces from him; we esteem him not," and thought themselves, forsooth, thus defeating the very Emmanuel whom they were thus according the very reception which their own Isaiah had foreseen for him. "Come unto his own. Of his own not received." The evangelist goes on to add, with a divine equanimity, "but as many as received him to them gave

he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." As Christ at quitting the world said virtually, belief is salvation, unbelief is perdition, so has John declared, that the hinge of regeneration, the seal of sonship to a new adoption by God the Father, is belief or faith in Christ. "To them that *believe on his name*, which were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

The Holy Ghost is the author of the new birth. Faith in the name of the Divine and Atoning Son as the channel of the regeneration; and a common heirship this side the grave and beyond the grave in the household of faith with the other children of divine grace, and hereafter among the sharers of the celestial glory, as the prospect set before those renewed in nature and born to a higher and better and purer life,—such is John's statement of regeneration.

Until the great work of his passion was consummated, and the final culminant miracle of his resurrection and his ascension was superadded as the counterpoise and the enhancement of Christ's humiliation to death, it was not, in the harmonious order of the divine economy, as yet fitting that the Holy Ghost should be given in the full measure of his influence. After its outgushing in Pentecost, the apostles were prepared for carrying their world-wide testimony to all people. The Saviour had himself honored in the centurion and in the Syro-phœnician woman and in the Samaritan a faith that as from Gentile homes was stretching out its hands to the Hebrew Messiah, who was also to show himself the Desire of

all nations and the Light of the entire world. The book called the Acts of the Apostles seems to some a disordered and fragmentary treatise; but it appears to us framed with a divine symmetry. It begins at Jerusalem with a Hebrew apostate. It wheels around to Antioch, a centre of Greek cultivation, where the disciples were first called Christians, and where the question is raised, Should Jewish proselytism be required to membership from Gentile converts in the new kingdom universal and eternal? From Jerusalem inspired apostles attest and sanction as right the course of Paul. The Gentile believer need not enter Christian privileges through Jewish portals. Then that great apostle of the Gentiles is dropped at the conclusion of the history in Rome, the pagan heart of that great Gentile civilization, there to deliver before Cæsar and his motley household, and his many-tongued garrison, and the polyglot traders and courtiers and visitors of that metropolis, a faith that demands the credence and the homage, and that propounds the salvation, of all people under the whole heavens.

Citizenship in Christ's empire begins with regeneration. Faith in him is the very first outgush of the new-found spiritual life. The new heirs of Jehovah are born into the household of faith with brotherhood to the Man of Nazareth on their birth registers. True religion is not a matter of heritage. God's new progeny are not such by virtue "of blood," be it that of Abraham or that of Cæsar or that of Japheth. It is not "of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." Carnal parentage cannot secure it, nor can pastor or apostle, saintly man though he



be, assure it to his most cherished and kindly pupils. The divine power stamps the images, the divine grace widens the invitation. All may ask from the bounty that is of Heaven's bestowing; none may presume from the nationalities and the kinships, the objects of man's confident reckoning.

We said of the three great words, reform, revolution, and regeneration, Christ's was the greatest. The Jew had been warned by our Lord's harbinger that the axe was uplifted in vengeance; and, unless there was reform, there would come revolution. The mass of the nation were heedless of the warning and reckless of the impending retribution. Caiaphas had said that unless Christ were taken out of the way, the Roman would soon strip them of home and nationality. In the quick rush of the divine arbitrament on this great quarrel, and as against this sinning people, the Roman came, soon after they had taken off their Christ, to take from them fane and priesthood, city and home, and the independence and unity of the national life. Refusing reform, they incurred revolution. In how tremendous a shape the last came, as the alternative of a proffered but a spurned regeneration, the pages of Hebrew and Roman writers tell. Twelve thousand Jewish captives labored to build that massive Coliseum begun by the father, Vespasian, and completed by the son, Titus, under whose valor Judea incurred her largest and worst captivity. That Coliseum, in its ruins, stands to our own times, so vast and strong, though plundered of its materials and layers of stone, that pilgrims had learned to say long since,



“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;  
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;  
And when Rome falls—the world.”

But Rome has yet another great monument commemorative that Christ—however improbable, at the time of its utterance, his warning seemed—spoke as One having authority over times and empires, over civilizations and barbarisms, classic, mediæval, and contemporaneous. The Arch of Titus, reared in honor of the waster of the temple and the subjugator of Judea, has been, at the hands of one of our own denominational worthies, Robert Haldane, in his treatise on the Evidences of Christianity, discussed with singular force as one of the monuments of the truth of the gospel. We allude to it now only in another light. The Great Teacher, who announced regeneration as the condition of life, and ruin as the dread, inevitable alternative for the rejection of it, hired no sculptor and enlisted no soldiers, and with not a roof to shelter his head had seemingly little reason to expect that art and history and architecture should give bond “in marble and enduring stone” as to the verity and gravity of his solemn admonitions. Yet when on the mouldering tablets of that arch the traveller sees depicted the spoils of the temple, how strangely does it seem appointed that the chisel of the heathen who reared the emblems of Hebrew rite kept no trace of altar where bullocks bled or other altar where incense smoked; but he framed the golden seven-branched candlestick and the table of shew-bread and the two silver trumpets of jubilee and passover. In the candelabrum seems preserved by

credible and authentic tradition the image of that which Moses framed for the tabernacle, and that which Solomon and Nehemiah and Herod renewed for the temple. When Judaism of the past gave place to the novel ordinances of this new Messiah and his new kingdom, did not architect and sculptor "build more wisely than they knew" when they fixed before the eyes of long-succeeding generations of pilgrims, that were to gaze upon the blurred outlines after traversing the wide Atlantic and coming from homes on the edge of the far Pacific, such emblems, that befitted not so much the old but rather the grander dispensation that abolished the temple? He proclaimed himself "the Light of the world," and his apostle John saw in the seven lamps of the Apocalypse the Spirit of God in his sevenfold energies, as the power, to all after ages, replacing and representing Christ. The Christ proclaimed himself the Bread of heaven, and the faith that fed on his flesh spiritually had life for evermore; and the enginery to which he committed the overthrow of an impenitent Judaism and an imbruted Paganism, the subversion of the old fetiches of Europe and of Asia and of Africa and of America, the contradiction and the refutation of all the philosophers and all the sciences, falsely so called, that would dispute and contradict him. His device was the trumpet of preaching. For the past, it announced the resurrection, and the jubilee of a finished redemption; for the future, it blows steadily the louder blast of a second resurrection and a universal judgment and a final and irreversible retribution.

The very trophies of stone that heathen conquerors

reared in their triumphs over Christ's Jewish compatriot slayers unconsciously, but most impressively, typified that if a Levitical dispensation had gone to wreck, a Christian dispensation had followed, an antitype outshining its ancient typical lights, renewing and surpassing its consecrated food, and publishing a most welcome jubilee; but if it were unheeded, then behind it the advent of the world's doomsday in the general resurrection. On the Mount of Olives had he wept over a city knowing not the time of her visitation and senselessly careless to her proffered redemption. As from the figures that tell of the dire victories of the grim legions of Titus there comes forth to the Christian's brooding eye the light and table and trumpet, the memory of him who gathers to his banquet of the regenerate of all people, the rays of whose mercy stream over all coasts and all kindreds, the light of all earth's hidings and mysteries, and out of whose gospel, heed it or scorn it as we may, blows steadily the peal to make us a new heart and a right way; or failing this, to abide as best we may the unalterable ruin of those who would brand falsehood on the Incarnate Truth, and who scoffed at the world's Judge when they might have had in him the world's Redeemer and Regenerator. The figure, veiled and sad, of Judæa the captive, on the Roman coin minted when Titus conquered Palestine, seems the image of a remorse that had wasted opportunity, and of a despair that had cancelled grace.

Now, what are the relations of this great truth, the new birth of regeneration, the only true gate for admission into the church and kingdom of the Christ, and of that

ordinance which, in the general judgment of all Christians, stands as the first symbol, on the convert's part, of his accession to the ranks of the militant church, and as the humble avowal of his hope, through the merits of his great Captain, to share one day the joys of the triumphal Church on high, the general assembly and church of the first-born?

As to its mode, we suppose that the form of the original word, its classic use in heathenism, and the connections in which that term is employed by the inspired evangelists and apostles, lead alike to the inference that it was to betoken a great moral wrench in the penitent's life, breaking him away from old associations and habits, and landing him, as by an irrecoverable consecration, under the command of a new Master, and set apart to the toils and sacrifices of a new and blessed conquest. The Lord, whose voice he had heard, and the Spirit, whose touch he had experienced, called him to remember that the Lord God, the Emmanuel, had said, "Behold, I make all things new." He, the loyal follower, bade deliberate farewell, not only to the hostile, but to the indifferent; not merely to the open scoffer, but to the waverer halting between two opinions. As for him, he was the cross-bearing recruit, who had accepted earnest-money and livery from a cross-bearing Leader. Bought with the Redeemer's own blood, he accepted the purchase-price, confessing himself no longer his own, but ransomed as with the precious blood of that sacrificed and atoning Victim.

In the language of Paul, he was buried as into the grave of Christ, and he emerged as if to share in the rising

again of him who in his own rent tomb had proclaimed and legitimated his claims to be the Resurrection and the Life. His soul's hope was not extinction with a crushed Victim, but the new life of a spirit planted as in the likeness of that exultant and invincible Conqueror who had said to death, "I will be thy destruction," and who had thus defied the ancient destroyer, not for himself only, but for the vast host of his regenerate and elect followers, and also for his enemies as well, whom death was not to hide from the just recompense of their impenitent and ingrate rejection of his appeals, his sympathies, and his mediation. Judge of quick and dead, the humblest disciple might look to share one day in the high prerogative of those who, as Paul pithily says, are to judge the world, assessors at the doomsday of this the Great Dispenser of man's endless condition and recompense. He was a scion grafted into the stem of Christ's life, and a fellow-heir made participant in the glories of the Elder Brother's royalties.

Now, many of the forms and rites of earthly orders have a touching significance, which the later generation who come after the founders might too easily forget. When, in the old chivalry, a young knight received his spurs, he put his clasped hands between the joined hands of his baron who conferred the distinction, and professed himself "the man," the vassal, in all honor, of this his feudal lord. Whilst his palms thus met betwixt the clasping palms of his elder those fingers could not grasp sword or spear; he was defenceless in the control and keeping of his superior. So the believer, participant of a



new and recovered life, has consecrated himself to Christ as the Lord's liege follower. If that better Captain, instead of hands meekly joined, ask a surrender as of arm and head and breast and feet, in the entirety of consecration to the loving Deliverer who, by cross and grave and sealed tombstone, redeemed him, is it a servile act that the convert should evade? On the contrary, it is his joy to proclaim that he has foresworn his old and degrading enslavement to self and the world and Satan. The Lord's full freedman he would be in every member of his bodily frame and in every faculty of the inhabiting soul—surrendered to the providence and Scripture and Spirit of this enfranchising Brother. The Greek communion, inheriting the language of the New Testament, has for eighteen centuries put upon the term one meaning. The Latin communion for nigh twelve centuries used ordinarily immersion as its method. Bossuet, one of the highest authorities in the Romish Church, allows its ancient and general prevalence. Campion the Jesuit, executed in England on account of treason in the days of Elizabeth (1581), regarded by his own order as a martyr and proposed for canonization, had been in Ireland, and wrote an account of the Irish as he had seen them. He represents them as leaving in baptism the right arm of the boy-babe unbaptized, to allow its giving a more cruel stroke, and a more deadly, when the boy should be a grown man, whilst the rest of his body was covered with the baptismal waters. Elizabeth herself is said in her infancy to have received baptism by immersion. In the life of Cardinal Ximenes, the great statesman of Spain, who did



so much in the days of that monarchy's greatness to aggrandize his sovereign and to compel the exile or the conversion of the Moor and the Jew, is said by one of his old biographers to have been obliged, in consequence of the number of his reluctant neophytes who to shun exile accepted Christianity, to omit the old and established usage of immersion, and to have substituted affusion or aspersion. With three thousand Moors in one day, or four thousand as some state it, to receive the ordinance, it became easier for the cardinal by a new mode of baptism to gather in his compulsory neophytes.

So, when an apostle, speaking of the deluge, declares that a like figure thereto, even baptism, doth now save us—baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God—does not he imply that the burial as of a flood was the natural form of baptism? And how does it enhance the honors of Christ's law when it is seen thus, not only to recall the crowning mercy of his subjugation of himself to the temporary bondage of the grave, but to receive the yet more ancient wonders of his mercy, when in the days of the deluge his care rode the entombing waters, and mercy rejoiced against judgment, and the ark, built by the prevision of the Sender of the deluge, saved his own elect from the general ruin, and over the ruins of an old effete, sin-scarred, and death-branded civilization made to ride the seed of a new economy and the ancestry of a freshly-peopled world, who, thus scourged and thus schooled, might be expected to learn wisdom and dread fresh relapses into sin.

In these, it has its connections with the dispensation that Christ opened by his gospel, and with the dispensation that Noah had centuries before reopened in quitting the ark and pressing his feet on Ararat. Baptism has, we say, very solemn intimations. The Great Architect who prescribed the keel that was to float the few saved from the deluge; and the Great Deliverer who foresaw as from the edge of the crib at Bethlehem the cross where he was himself to hang, drawing all men unto him,—set up a rite in its retrospects, alike of the recent Calvary and of the remoter Ararat, which should speak of the new King's investiture of his soldiers with their livery, their badge, and their letters of registration, by something impressive and august. And we read in the ordinance as the Sovereign Saviour bequeathed it, in the yielding waters that bury and then restore the loyal disciple, the cenotaph of our great Leader, the persistent tomb perpetually erected by which he would have his death set forth to the end of the world, and his exulting triumph over death and his jubilant entrance into Paradise as well. And if it would be thought temerity for a follower of Michel Angelo or of Christopher Wren to pull down the tomb of either of these great architects on the plea of substituting a better, is it less temerity to innovate on the design in the gate of his own church, reared by the Great Architect? Bury us into the tomb he occupied. Plant us into the new-emerging life that he there displayed; nor think it shame to stand loyally by the ways that he has opened, and that none in all the world may better.

But who are the rightful recipients of this ordinance?

In the case of John, his harbinger, we find that he did not regard mere descent from Abraham as entitling men to pass to his ordinance. They were to be penitent, and to have the tree good, if they would have the fruit good ; else, a generation of vipers, they were banned from the privileges of the kingdom which he announced. Was Christ's a new baptism ? In larger privileges and clearer views of the truth, it might be. But we have no traces in Scripture that the apostles who had received John's baptism were required to accept a new rite in joining themselves to the Prince as they quitted the herald of that Prince. And when John the Evangelist declares the sonship given to Christ's true people to be not after the will of the flesh nor the will of man, but to be for those who believe in the name of Christ, it seems a simple and inevitable inference that regeneration belongs, only in the way of faith upon Christ, to the souls who personally see, know, and welcome Christ.

Now, to put the ordinary expression of regeneration outwardly before the actual and internal experience of such regeneration in the enlightened, disciplined, penitent, and renewed follower of Christ, seems a most dangerous assumption of power in the church, and also a most rash ascription of intrinsic and magical efficacy to the outer emblem.

The churches early, but most unrightfully, learned to annex not only the remission of sins to the ordinance, but the regeneration itself—to attach pardon from Christ and new life from the Holy Ghost as sequents to an external rite. Priestly hands and church lavers were thus employed, by an assumption that not one page of Scripture

warrants, to usurp the prerogatives of God the adopting Father, and Christ the mediating Brother, and the Paraclete, the renewing and illumining Teacher.

Some were induced, like Constantine and like Theodosius, long after becoming in conscience and judgment convinced of the truth of the gospel, to delay submission to the rite from the fancy that by deferring to a late day their baptism they should thus ensure the cancelment and the remission of all sins that had been before committed; whereas they had learned to think sins wrought after baptism especially likely to miss pardon and to ensure hell. Thus they had been taught to look away from the Atoner and the Regenerator to the rite, and the sacerdotal hands and the consecrated walls connected with the administration of the rite.

Others, believing again that the infant dying without baptism was beyond the reach of regeneration and repelled hopelessly and evermore from the precincts of Paradise, urged the speedy bestowal of the rite upon helpless, untaught, wailing, and protesting infancy. And a council, which Hefele declares it probable to have issued such a canon (A.D. 418) in the beginning of the fifth century, pronounced its anathema on all holding that children dying unbaptized might possibly be saved, and might, if missing Paradise, reach at least some intermediate region of peace and painlessness. This sixteenth synod of Carthage pronounced the kingdom of heaven and life everlasting beyond the reach of the little child dying so without church rites.

The anger of church and church-rulers, in the Middle

Ages, was especially enkindled against all who, reading their Bibles, held that the rites of the church were due only to the willing, the believing, and the regenerate, and that the eternal interests of the little child, be it of heathen or of Christian parents, dying in its age of helplessness, were very safe in the keeping of him who could do no wrong. The bitter and the murderous rage of persecution flamed against those who held thus to the salvation of infants, entirely apart from the church ordinances of which they were as yet incapable. Augustine himself who had wavered as to the spiritual prospects of such babes early dying, was silent after the voice of the council.

Jansenism itself, so noble and glorious a memory in its defence of the great doctrines of grace, has yet its sad record in this very matter. The great volume that Jansenius prepared on the doctrines of Augustine, and whose posthumous appearance awakened so memorable and protracted a conflict, the effects of which are not yet spent, has attached to it, in some of its editions, the treatise of, an Irish ecclesiastic, a fellow-student of the great founder of the Jansenist school, and who afterward became an archbishop of Tuam, Florence Coury. Its theme is, "The State of the Little Children who die Unbaptized;" their outlook in the world beyond. In monastic establishments the middle meal of the day was often accompanied with some religious reading, one of the brotherhood reading aloud whilst his brothers were at the board. St. Beuve, the last accomplished historian of Port Royal, speaks of this treatise with its gloomy forebodings as to the despair awaiting all children who die unbaptized, whether in



Christian or heathen lands, as being made, in the early days of the Jansenist movement, the reading of monastic schools in Belgium, where, while partaking of their noon-day repast, the youthful theologians were invited to muse as they ate on these sad dwelling-places of exile returnless and of despair unappeasable, that, according to their false views of baptismal regeneration, awaited so many hapless myriads. All pagan infants so dying, it is held, go beyond the range of hope.

Now, the pontiff awarded to Henry VIII. of England—though he and his successors in wearing the tiara had bitter occasion to regret the bestowal—the title of Defender of the Faith. Ghastly and ludicrous seemed often its associations when contrasted with the character, morally, of some of the royal wearers. Especially baleful and deplorable must it have seemed to a devout Romanist when this same Henry, defending the faith, hounded to the death zealous Romanist champions, like Bishop Fisher and his own accomplished chancellor, Sir Thomas More; more sad even to a devout thinker of Protestant sympathies must it have seemed when flaunted by a Charles II. in his harem, or a James II. in the butcheries that he required of a Jeffreys against his innocent Protestant subjects.

Earlier than its permanent bestowal on Henry VIII., that title, "Defender of the Faith," had been occasionally bestowed on individuals of the Lancastrian royal house who had brought into use against Wycliffe and the Lollards the terrible writ for the burning of heretics. He who had rebuked his own apostles, when they would have called down fire on the village not receiving him, with the



calm reproof that these over-zealous disciples knew not the spirit which they breathed when thus avenging injuries to him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them,—he gave no such patterns as to the mode of guarding his own truth and saving faith.

And whatever claim, regal or pontifical, rulers have arrogated, to confer or wear the distinction of being truly and heartily the defenders of the faith, we doubt not that the verdict of honest history and the sentence of the eternal judgment will be, that the epithet belongs rightfully and loyally to those who, standing on the ancient ways, have refused the innovations, and resisted meekly and fearlessly the usurpations, that would entrench on the laws Christ left for his own churches.

To preserve the honor of his cause it is needed that the confessors who call none other than him their Master should jealously guard the integrity and the spirituality of the churches of the twice-born, the regenerate. While asserting, that the infant should be shielded with all tenderness, and taught early and faithfully the gospel as Christ gave it, how many of our fellow-confessors have resolutely held that only those taught of the Spirit and regenerate had right to the ordinance of Christ's house. They have also taught with resolute simplicity that the souls of those dying in early childhood—so large a portion as they formed of the trophies of Death from our race—died as safely without church ordinances as if they had been admitted to them, unconscious of their meaning. They have held that to expect, for the unconverted and unholy, remission of sins and a true regeneration from

outer ordinances and priestly manipulations, was to cheat the soul thus misguided, and to degrade the ordinances thus misapplied. They have dared to ask that those bearing the vessels of the Lord, the Holy One, should be holy; to assert that none, unless born again, had right to stand in Christian membership.

But for just these professions of hope and confessions of doctrine they have been put under ban, harried, exiled, proscribed, and incarcerated. Some have been drowned; others flung to vermin in foul and untended dungeons; others burned alive; others buried, like the Belgian sister of our own faith, Anna van den Hove, who, as the sixteenth century was going out, was attended by Jesuits as the grave was gradually filled over her, and urged to recant that she might have life spared her. When she persisted in her meek confession and then and there refused the apostasy, was not hers a defence of the faith which many a learned apologist can never hope to rival? And in the great day of rising and of awarding, they who thus avouched the truth, and scorned to accept deliverance at the cost of renouncing and surrendering that apostolic verity, will shine when he, the Christ, shall lead the full and final regeneration of his people.

A new Pentecost, bringing the churches to a higher consecration and putting the Christ in his rightful supremacy over conscience and creed and character, is the hope of the world for abiding reform; for peaceful and general revolutions, that shall enfranchise, exalt, and unite the nations; for a regeneration such as God waits to bestow, and which man should habitually and reverently implore.

IV.

THE CHURCHES AS LEFT BY CHRIST  
AND MADE BY MAN.



## THE CHURCHES AS LEFT BY CHRIST AND MADE BY MAN.

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It may to some have seemed that church history begins where the Bible ends; that it is more properly the annals of the people of God after the Master in his bodily presence had quitted them, and after the Holy Spirit had pronounced the last sentences of the New Testament with a solemn ban upon the rash adventurousness that should either on the one hand mutilate the record, or on the other hand assume to amplify and supplement that Revelation. But if the church be, in truth, a kingdom whose Divine Founder and Ruler is still in his omnipresence at whatever spot, in whatever land, and in whatever century, but two or three of his meanest disciples gather in his name; if his Scripture be her unamendable, unimpeachable law, and his Spirit her perpetual and indispensable life,—then no safe history of her can be outlined without hearing first his own claims and tracking his earthly career, or without pondering the traits and laws of the first churches in the first Christian century as the New Testament paints them. Go to the Christian Fathers as dissevered from the inspired evangelists and apostles; turn over the voluminous and dreary records of the so-

called councils, and the inquirer is floundering as in a pathless forest, where trees obstruct on every side the vision and show no pathway—a very Dismal Swamp, where the foot sinks and the miasma ascends and the snake lurks. In the fight between the adherents of Absalom and the loyal soldiers of his father it is said, that “the wood devoured that day more people than the sword devoured.” Church history, severed from the New Testament and from the Christ whom that Testament presents, is such mere morass and pestilent jungle, alike perplexing and destructive, where a man learns to plunge forward into passive credulity or to start back into sheer skepticism and despair.

But learn from the book, as Heaven has completed and sealed it, the character and promises of the great Captain of our salvation; find there the hint given of the plans on which he has inaugurated his campaigns for the conquest of the race by the few, the poor, the persecuted, and proscribed; see there his precise and emphatic announcement that the gates of hell will storm, but fail to shake, the church built on the Emmanuel, its foundation-stone; heed loyally and trustingly his pledge that to the little flock, hurled amid the ravening wolves of the nations as a flock of gentle and harmless sheep, and in comparative numbers, as against the hosts of their opponents, “a *little* flock,” it is yet the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom; hearken to the portrait he draws of the growth of that kingdom, slow and inconsiderable, like the evolution of the mustard-seed, which has grown into branches that shelter the birds of heaven, inaudible but persuasive



as the leaven tingeing and altering the whole measure of meal under which it seems at first irrecoverably concealed and suppressed; listen to the pledges given, as out of his agonies and humiliation and entombment, that thus should he draw all men unto him, and that to the end of the world he will be the Light and the Life of his people; ponder all his warnings as to the tares interwoven with the wheat, and the false Christs that shall arise, assuming to personate and supplant himself, but against whom his servants, vigilant and forewarned, must patiently watch and loyally protest,—then, thus furnished, the simplest Christian may launch out upon the quaking fen and tread his way across what else would seem a God-forsaken wilderness. With the Bible in hand and the eye fixed on Christ, the Lawgiver and Sovereign of the kingdom and the Leader of the sacramental host, order springs out of the tangled mass of seeming confusion. And it is one of the grand arguments of hope, in the spiritual collisions of our age, that the eye of foe and of friend has alike been turned so signally on Christ. His character is the very core of Revelation; his history is the clue of all God's providence, in the long past and through the dim, far future. Now, from every school of faith, and almost, it might be said, of unbelief as well as faith, has proceeded some new biography of this Son of man and Son of God. Paulus and Strauss and Neander and Sepp and Farrar and Angus and Andrews and Pressensè and Ellicott and Renan are but a small part of the throng that have essayed to write the wondrous story. And to the errorist and the man of true evangelical faith come the Hebrew and the Moham-

medan even, adding their attempts to solve the mystery or to explain the revelation. It is to the believer cause of gladness and holy gratulation that the onset of battle dashes thus in our own age, on the part of Christ's adversaries, upon that portion of the Christian lines where, as we well know, moves the Invincible, where plans the Infallible, where, overruling all events, comes he the Inevitable, our Captain of salvation, the Lord of lords, to whose feet, as subject or as penitent, must ultimately converge all the schools of worldly lore and all the colliding interests of all the nations that fret their little day over the crust of our tiny planet. Let the gainsayers explain our Christ if they can, without shattering their philosophies upon the problem. They who stumble there are broken. And if the unbeliever must, as he best may, give some plausible and harmonious solution of the appearance and character of this Hebrew Sage and Reformer, much more should the Christian commence his survey of the course of the churches as under the eyes of this his Redeemer, and fasten the first unrolling fold as between the lids of the New Testament. The kingdom of God is a growth. The church of Christ's planting is a vine, of which himself is the stem, and all the saints of all the ages are but the dependent branches. Were I called to study the pine, should I begin with it as it lies under my hand, in the wood of this desk, after woodman's axe, and carpenter's plane and hammer, and painter's brush have all in their turn passed over it, giving it new outlines and place and hues? Or should I not rather seek the tree in its own original site, the rock at its

foot, its top soaring heavenward in the free air, and the storms of winter howling harmlessly through its dark green shrouds? So the church begins her story in the book of Inspiration, and in the course and character of her Divine Head and Architect. His cross, instead of being her doom, is her banner, woven into her creeds, inscribed on her ordinances, the burden of her every song, and the plea of every prayer that swells from her closets or her sanctuaries, or rises from her quiet death-beds or the smoke of her martyr-pyres. He, the Saviour, the Alpha of creation and providence, is, especially and pre-eminently, the Alpha of all true church history.

What is the church? In her future state, when faultless and complete, all the elect gathered to their final home; in that church triumphant, which is the attendant of the Bridegroom Redeemer in the last stages of God's providence,—she is one and perfect. In her intermediate and earthly stage she is, according to the ordinary language of Scripture, many and imperfect, made up of local congregations. In these may be intermingled the truly converted and the self-deceived, or the conscious heartless pretender; a Simon Magus jostling a Simon Peter. But where faithful men, holding the Head, meet in Christ's name, obeying his word, and imploring and receiving the aids of his Spirit, and observing his ordinances, his Bible recognizes them by the name of churches. It has no hesitation to employ this term, not only in its singular, but also in its plural form; and to recognize the churches having rest in Judea; the churches of the Gentiles; the

churches of Galatia; the churches of Macedonia; the churches of Asia.

Some seem to forget this, and think of all the communities of primitive believers as making up but one visible church. To this new imaginary body it is easy to ascribe a legislation, a power of development, and a power of repression and excision, which the Holy Scriptures do not attach to the churches as apostles move among them. If the views of our Lord's kingdom, as we have reviewed them, be just, we may not admit that he has transmitted his legislative and kingly power to any earthly synod or representation. It was consummate and it was exhausted in his own Divine Selfhood.

Compare with this view the language of one of the profoundest and clearest intellects our race probably ever had, the devout Jansenist, Blaise Pascal. Speaking of the church as his Catholic training presented it to his mind, and regretting its modern deficiencies as compared with its pristine traits, Pascal has said, in regard to baptism, the ordinance treated when we last met:

"It is not to the church that should be imputed the misfortunes which have *followed a change in such (her) salutary discipline*, for she has not changed in spirit, however she may *have changed in conduct*. Having . . . seen that the *deferring of baptism* left a great number of children *in the curse of Adam*, she wished to deliver them from this mass of perdition *by hastening the aid* which she could give them; and this good mother sees, only with extreme regret, that what *she devised for the salvation of these children* has become the *occasion for the destruction of adults*. . . . She

does not *accord baptism to children* until after they have declared by the *mouth of sponsors* that they *desire* it, that they *believe*, that they *renounce the world and Satan*."

Infant baptism, in the mind of this great thinker, came in, because the church in baptism saw the remission of sins and regeneration ; and lest, by her deferring it to the age of actual belief and until the fact of personal renewal, the infant should miss heaven, she accepted the vicarious engagements of sponsors on behalf of these their voiceless charges ; but the consequence was, that the church had no longer, as in early times, a membership who had actually and personally and consciously renounced the world and the flesh and the devil. Yet, it might be asked of the holy Jansenist, if the adults were, in this later age of the church, thus in unbroken league with the world, the flesh, and the devil, of what avail could such ungodly sponsorship, proffered by the liege adherents of this evil trinity, be for the infant in whose name they repeated promises which these vow-takers for babes had never kept for themselves ? And who gave the church this power of "*changing her discipline*" to protect infants, early dying, from the danger of missing heaven ? Was that danger stated in any page of the New Testament ? Has the church that power of "development" for which John Henry Newman has in our own day pleaded ? Developing baptismal regeneration as contingent on the ordinance, and as a protection, antedating baptism, to secure such right to Paradise, she could not, in the first stage of her error, sever the one ordinance of the Christian church from the other, the baptism from the communion. And so, for



centuries, the eucharist was administered to infants. And they who lean on early Fathers for their attestations on behalf of infant baptism cannot, in consistency, shut their eyes to the attestations of the same Fathers on behalf of the little children partaking of the bread and the cup.

As presented in the New Testament, the churches of true disciples, apostles yet surviving to oversee and guide them, were not free from errors and from scandals. In Corinth and in Galatia, Paul reprehends them. In Crete, the frank apostle quotes an old harsh proverb, to note the besetting sins yet clinging to converts. In the churches of Asia, John denounced the Jezebel found in a Christian assembly, wielding her influence and swaying her partisans; and disowned the synagogue of Satan, as he termed them, sheltering themselves under Christian forms and names and surroundings.

Both the Divine Master and his apostles warned against the growth of evil influences, in closest proximity to ordinances and revelations even. There were Antichrists already in the world. One who "letted," or hindered, prevented the coming development of a great Man of sin, the dread and paramount Antichrist, who, sitting in the temple of God, should give himself out as God. Against these dangers the primitive disciples were to keep themselves in the study of the Scripture, in the love of Christ, and in the faithful practice of the institutions as the apostles had delivered them.

In the one of the New Testament ordinances, the disciple pledged himself to a continuous remembrance of his



Saviour's death;—that ordinance was to him emblem, monument, pledge, and earnest—a rite of fourfold aspect, presenting emblematically hope for the flock out of the Shepherd's sacrifice—a monument of the mode in which, borne to the dead, that Rescuer had emerged out of the gloom, Lord of the living and the dead—a pledge, by the disciple, as solemnly, deliberately proclaiming to the world of impenitent men, and to the gazing world of angels good and angels evil, that the convert believed himself partaker of a new spiritual life, enfranchised from his old tyrant Satan and sealed to the will and kingdom of his Enfranchiser Christ—an earnest, for the disciple, that, like as his eyes, from a momentary and liquid entombment, looked out afresh on the world intact, so out of the later sepulchre, to which disease and perhaps martyrdom should consign him, he looked to arise, in the right and in the likeness of his ascended Lord, to a better life which that Master had prepared in heaven for all his true followers; and an earnest too that, as in obedience to Christ's commands he now receives from the Consoling and Illumining Spirit fresh cheer and hope, so hereafter in loyal waiting he may expect evermore fresh helping, and the Hill Difficulty open out upon the House Beautiful and the Delectable Mountains.

In addition to this preliminary ordinance not to be repeated, a single and final act of consecration to Christ's laws and people, he was to repeat frequently another ordinance, that set before him and his fellow-confessors their spiritual dependence on this same Saviour for continued grace. Bread of heaven and cup of salvation, they all

were to find in the Incarnate Son of God. Withdrawn from the eye and ear of sense, he, the God, was not veiled from the opened ear and unsealed eye of faith. On this Lord, as the day's task came, they leaned for the day's strength. Teachers might be removed; age or persecution might smite down the men at whose lips they had first heard the word of life; but, in the grace of the Ever-Living Head, they were assured of a presence that no bereavement, no prisoning walls, no remote exile, could isolate, estrange, or bar out from them. Bound to each other as bearers of a common burden, they were pledged to sympathy and brotherhood and mutual vigilance. But, besides their obligations to the mass of their fellow-worshippers, they had regard to the teachers—artisans it might be or scholars, men mighty in the Scriptures and rich in spiritual experience—whom God had set over them as under-shepherds. Far as their admonitions and instructions were warranted by Scripture, to these, their teachers, they were pledged to give heed, as to those set over them in the Lord, and watching for their souls as those who must give account. When the providence and Spirit of God called any of them to a distant field of toil and witness, the contributions and the prayers of their fellow-confessors should help the journey, and sustain the messenger in the remote scenes where his testimony might be delivered.

They were laborers and light-bearers, for the world as well as for the church, gathering, by counsel and example and winning tenderness and serene patience, the regard, and, if it might be, the souls, of the unconverted around

them. The church was a candlestick giving light—a pharos shedding its beams along a perilous coast and over a stormy sea. The embodied churches cared for the nations and looked to see the ingathering of multitudes, won to the same Paradise, and aroused by the appeals of the same Redeeming Brother, the same Avenging and Inevitable Judge.

The church had, as a local body, its right not only, but its covenanted duty, of governing, under the rules of Christ's statute-book, in the presence of the Omnipresent Head, and by the aid of that Paraclete promised as his gift and officiating as his representative, the body of fellow-disciples. The reproof, the rebuke, the exhortation, the encouragement, and, if it were necessary, the excision from the number of the faithful, were among the services for which they had been enlisted and solemnly sworn.

The name "sacrament" among these Pagan-Roman masters meant the soldier's solemn oath of loyalty to his standard in the repose of the camp and the rush of battle. Christians early learned to apply the term as denoting that the ordinances of discipleship pledged each church-member to a loyal, lifelong, and fearless aggression upon the world as massed in spiritual revolt against its rightful Lord.

What safeguard, it may be asked, was there for true unity? Needed there any better, could there be any higher, than the covenanted supervision of him who walked, with unwearied tread and unblenching eye, amid the golden candlesticks, and who, to the end of the world, assured his loyal followers that this his care should not falter? The Godhead was pledged to the oneness and

invariableness and all-sufficiency of the great Source of their life and growth. There was, however, yet other wreath of perpetual union between the devout church on the earth and the great Theme of their worship in the heavens. It was—in the withdrawal of his own bodily and visible presence—found from the nearer presence of the Holy Ghost, one Spirit with the Father and the Son, and to be implored and obtained by all the godly. To them, the Paraclete's omnipresence was the seal of true permanence and of real interior oneness. Author, as well as Expounder, of all Scripture, he would keep in the bond of peace and brotherly accord his own Israel, of many earthly ancestries and many terrestrial dialects; yet, in his power, they would be assured of a force that should melt and recast them into one incandescent and flowing unison. In virtue of it, the child of an imbruted Heathenism, in our days, is made one in heart with the Psalmist of Hebrew lineage, and with the confessors of primitive Christianity, and with the German, the French, the British Christian, whose ancestry and training were so divergent from his own. One Spirit stretches its unbroken accord over the wastes of the centuries; and the church of the one God is one—radically, cordially, intrinsically, and inseparably one in him, the Jehovah, holding Christ the one Head, having all one Father, and keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Is there power, it may be asked, in these narrow, parish-bound, local communities of the regenerate, to effect harmonious feeling over large tracts of territory? We answer, the writers on civil government and national growth

in our own age are discerning in just such local, self-knowing, self-ruling neighborhoods the secret of republican prosperity in the New World, and the chief haunt and refuge of social order under the despotism of the Old World. De Tocqueville found the talisman of the freedom of our Revolutionary forefathers in the preparation which the town-meeting, with its care of the local needs and the local wrongs, had given those fathers for the due administration of a republic when it was cast upon them. So Sir Henry Maine finds, in the village communities of old India, a form of self-rule that has preserved most of the peace and real order of the Eastern nations under the successive waves of invasion that have gone over their land. "Their rulers shall be of themselves" was God's promised blessing to his people when obedient. A local, independent, self-governed community was the original form of polity for the primitive Christian church.

But man, in his temerity, has undertaken to develop and to improve and to expand upon the handiwork of God. What has been the result? As the faith took hold on individual disciples in the great cities of the Roman Empire, it became the practice of too many to lower the spiritual requirements, that they might more easily and rapidly augment the external discipleship. Wealth and worldly honor flowed in upon the religious bodies thus enlarged; but the spirit of worldly aggrandizement took, with too many, the place of the fear of God, and of the love for the truth. Christian leaders affected the pomp and the prerogatives and the severities of pagan magistrates. Synods, grown up at first in the purpose, it may



be, of cultivating a brotherly accord and co-operation, affected legislative powers; and pronounced, in their own fancied eminence, their edicts and their anathemas. The humble preacher was replaced by the arrogant prelate. Festivals of a foul and reckless heathenism were imported into the Christian ritual and service, to attract and reconcile a rabble of unregenerate worshippers. A thin varnish of Christian names and usages was used to convert huge blocks of paganism into buttresses of the Christian church.

The Satan, who, as a Christian Father has so justly said, is "the ape of God," wise and shrewd enough to see the unmatched sagacity of divine methods, and blind and callous enough to affect a rivalry, alike unwarranted and baneful, with the one and holy Jehovah, saw it his interest, when persecution could no longer intimidate the advancing churches of Christ, to shift his engines and affect to be the ready patron of what he could now best clog, by climbing to its chief places of council and domination. As Hawthorne, in one of his grim but most expressive stories phrases it, Beelzebub undertook to run special trains on a railroad line which deftly passed and evaded the Wicket Gate, and ran through the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the Celestial City, himself chief engineer and stoker; but somehow failing to land his passengers at the promised gates of the heavenly Jerusalem; and, by a dark tunnel, at the spot where Bunyan's Ignorance disappeared—a tunnel somewhat badly lighted—contriving quietly to shunt off the cars to a place which the old-fashioned disciples had called Tophet.



The Jewish polity was a scheme of surpassing force and skill for its purposes of preserving, in a special people, the light of the divine oracles and covenant, till the times were ripe for the manifestation of the long-expected Christ. Meanwhile, by solemn rites and a gorgeous temple and a separate priesthood and one central local sanctuary, the nation were trained to be the custodians of the incipient and germinant gospel, until the era came when bud was to burst into full flower, and the Trust of one people to be proclaimed as the Desire of all nations. When he came, he put away this local, central sanctuary and this separate priesthood. The sacrifices received their fulfilment and their absolution in the one oblation upon Calvary proclaimed as final when the Victim cried, "It is finished!" and endorsed by the Father as effectual in the descending blaze of the Spirit on Pentecost. If the Epistle to the Hebrews have any force, its meaning is that Christ is henceforward the one true Priest. His people all, the regenerate hearers as well as the regenerate preachers, are priests unto God, and are also kings as well as priests; but it is not, in the case of human pastor or disciple, a secular royalty or an Aaronic sacerdocy. That dropped away with the fall of Jerusalem and with the dispersion of the Jews and with the establishment of God's kingdom in Christ, just as the last year's husks scaled off and disappeared from the bread-corn that furnished the loaves of to-day's repast on your tables. The new economy eliminated it. But because that polity of sacrifice and priesthood and central temple, which God used, for their fit time, and then superseded them, was so

grand and wise a provision for the establishment of a temporal domination, Satan, the mimic, grafted the outgrown and obsolete economy of Judaism on his travesty of the Christian economy. A pompous ritual; and sacrifices many, so called; and a great central religious fane, the seat of special power over all people,—were, in defiance of apostolical prediction and apostolical warning, made the enginery of one sitting in the temple of God and giving himself out as God.

When a nation was willing to allow this corrupt form of the Christian church to bewitch and control it, the state drank, in the terrible language of the Apocalypse, of the wine of the Sorceress. It was made the duty of the secular power to aid, by fines, exiles, and prisons and martyr-fires, the edicts of the nominal but apostate church.

Was it a scene of real peace for the nations? On the contrary, some of the darkest pages of modern history are reeking and bloodsodden from the rivalries and wars, the scandals and enormities and massacres, thus occasioned. Was it real unity, when, in the rivalry between the metropolitans of York and Canterbury, in mediæval England, the one called the primate of England, the other enlarging his titles to be called the primate of all England, and when all the mitred hierarchy had assembled in solemn convocation,—was it in the spirit of Jesus, the lowly and the cross-bearing, when the one of these great churchmen, to prevent his rival from acquiring, by any seeming submission on his part, the superiority over him, as that rival filled the chief central seat, deposited himself on the knees

and in the lap of his fellow-archbishop, thus indicating his stern resolve to make no implied renunciation of his own equality, if not superiority?

The state gives power, but she imposes checks, as well as pays revenues. And when, in our own colonial days, the English Established Church sought, far back as the times of Archbishop Laud, and next by Bishop Atterbury, the elegant friend of Pope and Swift, and now by Bishop Butler, the author of the immortal "Analogy," and now by Archbishop Secker, the extension of the episcopacy to these American colonies, how loth was the home government to make the required expenditure, and how averse the Puritan colonists to accept the restraints and the costliness of new and colonial sees.

Local churches, self-controlled and self-sustained, had preceded by far the wealthy imperial government in the task of evangelizing our shores. So when India with its millions passed, by the enterprise of the East India Company and the valor of Clive, under the sceptre of Britain, how reluctant were merchant-traders in the far East, and British legislators in the far Western isle, to permit, much less to equip, an evangelizing force for the myriads of their new subjects, Pagan and Mohammedan.

And when the feeble churches of our own English brethren adventured in the work, how scant were their stores, how grim and savage the dislike they encountered from the colonial governors; how fierce and rancorous the scorn that rained down upon them from the high places of literature. But strong in the faith of Christ, and free in their local church government, Carey and his brethren

went forth, with a few paltry pounds in the treasury, to confront the Brahmin and the old Sanscrit lore, and the widow's suttee, and customs and philosophies that were already old and solidly anchored in the national habits in the days when a Daniel was yet living in Shushan. Denied a home on British soil, they accepted and effected a lodgment—like some tiny sparrows building their nests in the pediment of some tall temple whose gates they might not be allowed to pass—on the little Danish ledge of Serampore, skirting closely but timidly the proud and broad colonial realm of Britain.

It was a victory for the local, congregational, undowered Christian church when they went forth thus. Yet the glory was never arrogated by these good but humble men as being their own. The Sanscrit lore of the world is in their debt. British domination, assured by their Havelock, in the day of its terrible peril, against odds the most fearful; modern missions, thus encouraged and followed up by other churches, undowered and established as well; the souls they have won, the Scriptures they have translated and scattered, and the social reforms they have aided to inaugurate,—all these emphatically attest the wisdom of leaving our churches, as Christ himself left them, bound to be scriptural, bound to be spiritual, that they may thus be one, thoroughly, permanently, and inseparably one.

And such unity it is that makes certain the true freedom of the churches. When Wycliffe sent his "poor parsons," as they were called, men with long russet robes, to preach the gospel through England, the great Reformer

shrewdly boasted that these true "watch-dogs," as in homely phrase he described them, were "not chained to the kennel." In market-places and by roadsides, wherever they could win hearers, they raised their voices and delivered their testimony. The Reformer's translation of the Scriptures into the English tongue and the toils of these humble teachers brought on the great Lollard movement. It spread into Bohemia, then, by royal marriage-ties, connected with England; and Huss and Jerome of Prague were among the fruits. Seemingly quenched for the time in blood, yet, as dominant and established churches did not commence it, as parish boundaries could not limit it, so prisons and pillories and stakes could not utterly extinguish it.

Long after, when Methodism under Whitefield and the two Wesleys invaded the religious apathy and stagnation of Christian Britain and reached the British colonies on these Western shores, it was again as free local churches that the converts were gathered by the resolute and loving itineracy. The heart, set on fire by the love of Christ, waited not to ascertain stipend or to bargain for cosy harboring and quiet hearing. The well of living water, as the Master promised, upbursting by the Spirit's energy and the Saviour's prompting in the regenerate heart, shot up its crystal column of gladness and refreshing, when, alas! it provoked but too often priestly scorn and the hootings and brutal maltreatment of the mob. Whitefield bore to his death-day scars received in Ireland for thus preaching the gospel; and the Wesleys were more than once in danger of sacrificing life in those labors, then so denounced,



now so generally and justly acknowledged as a blessing to the nation.

The Methodists in their leaders were church clergymen, but the church generally disfavored or openly and fiercely condemned them. They acted on the great principle that the isolated church and the isolated believer have a right to proclaim the common salvation to a world sinking, if unwarned, into a common and speedy perdition. As Baptists, we do not claim their honors; but we rejoice in the manful and heroic exemplification they gave of the great principle that no church, national and state endowed, has a right to hinder by its edicts, or its parish bounds, or its fines, or its prisons, the course of free churches in proclaiming a free gospel.

Our own Baptist brethren in Virginia and in New England brought themselves into the danger not only, but into the endurance, of loss and imprisonment, when they thus, in the homely image used by Wycliffe, burst the chain, foreswore the kennel, and carried their watch-dog mission wherever the poor flock of Christ were wandering, like lost sheep in the wilderness, and with none to care for them—wherever the great enemy was driving his wolf-hunt of error and sin across the land.

To some, it may have seemed that all these are truths too generally accepted to need that they be again repeated. But if, as others hold, all who have been baptized, no matter by what sect or by what errorist, are in that fact made irrevocably subject to the control of one Christian church, and if the body claiming that oneness, and the exclusive right to the name Christ's own church, by recent



and solemn enactment proclaims that the state is bound. when the church shall think it expedient, to enforce submission to her authority by similar penalties, it will evidently follow that the question of true church unity and real church independence becomes a burning question, one of high moment to us as American citizens.

The Spirit of God has not, in the day of Pentecost, waited for the assent of Hebrew Sanhedrim and Roman Senate before he precipitated his influences on the churches of God. Where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty. This has been the old apostolic testimony. It has, through all the course of the intervening centuries, been the experience of Christ's loyal and regenerate people. With his book as the guide, and with a ministry and private membership of his anointing, the church has, as her birthright, imprescriptible and indefeasible freedom to make her testimony wide as is the range of her prayers, and to broaden her prayers to the full compass of the Master's generous promises.

Sir Isaac Newton held that the churches of our denomination had been memorably useful. Unhappily tinged with grave error as was his own mind, that lofty intellect pondered the prophetic portions of God's word; and he wrote on the Book of Daniel a treatise yet reprinted. He was accustomed to hold, that the Baptists and the Arians—or at least the Eusebians, a special division of the Arians—were the Two Witnesses named in John's Apocalypse. We have this statement on the authority of William Whiston, who succeeded Newton in his professorship at Cambridge, a man wrongheaded but singularly

honest, and as little capable of intentional misrepresentation as Goldsmith's imaginary Vicar of Wakefield. Whiston, who in his own Life more than once repeats the statement, adds to it the remark that he, Whiston, was both Baptist and Arian, but he did not, as did his illustrious friend, hold the Baptists to be identical with one of the two witnesses. Whiston rather inclined, with the learned Bishop Lloyd before him, and with many later scholars, to regard the two witnesses testifying for God and slain by Antichrist, as being the Waldenses and Albigenses. Heylin, the learned but bigoted biographer of Archbishop Laud, was loth, as he said, to follow the Waldenses and Albigenses into "their conventicles" for the succession of witnesses to God's true gospel.

But, apart from all these interpretations, it is deserving of consideration, that, mysterious as is the last book of the New Testament, yet amid its gorgeous and dazzling images, hard to interpret, are interspersed some of the most emphatic and direct utterances as to the future and celestial blessedness of God's people. The poorest and simplest of God's people have been enlightened and delighted by these intermingling promises, embedded but not beclouded in these mysterious prophecies. There is a special blessing, pronounced by the Divine Author of the book, on those who study it. Of course, examples, dire and many, recent and flagrant, warn against studying in self-confidence, and uttering our views and counting the years in precipitate heedlessness.

Much of the imagery of the Apocalypse is reproduced from prophetic books of the Old Testament. In the ear-

lier volume, the golden candlestick is one, as Zachariah saw it; but fed by two golden olive trees, emptying their golden oil by golden pipes into the candlestick, which needed this feeding to keep up its blazing. God presents, to the view of the apostle John, two candlesticks as well as two olive trees, where Zachariah had discerned but one candlestick, with a twofold supply from olive trees, not waiting for olive-gatherer or olive-press to cull and crush their fruit, but shedding the richness of their juices directly into the lamp-fires. It has seemed to us not impossible that God may have intended to symbolize and emphasize thus the peculiar distinction of preaching in the church of the New Dispensation. The written Scriptures were the source of guidance, and the reservoir of divine inspiration, to the earlier of the dispensations. But the King, now at last setting up his actual sovereignty on the earth in his own church, made the ministry its great means of edification and increase, and of spiritual aggression as against the world. It was a new and additional olive tree. The light of divine truth, in the character and story and dominion of Christ, is to shine steadily and with enhanced brightness over our own and all other lands. It is to be, under the plenary influences of the Spirit, fed, on the one side, by the written oracles, the record of the utterances of the old prophets of the Pen; on the other, it is to be fed by the evangelist and pastor, if truly commissioned of God, as his prophets of the Voice. They have no right to affect, or the merest approach to the authority of, the inspired prophet and apostle, whose testimony the Bible preserves. But, if

truly called of God and commissioned by the Spirit, they are to be mighty in the Scripture, and, as was said of an old worthy, "men of one book:"—thus spiritual, and distilling in a devout and lifelong study the lessons of Holy Writ, as by the living voice, into the ears and hearts of the church and the world, they cherish the flame that God lit; and that, once having lit it, the faithfulness and veracity and unchangeableness and unity of the Godhead will, evermore, guard, replenish, and heighten.

But he will not so guard it but that, for a season, under terrible forces of error and persecution, the two witnesses will seem slain, though scorn will require that their corpses lie unburied and dishonored. An age will come when the Scripture may be withdrawn, when, under the abounding influence of infidelity or scepticism, a living ministry will have also ceased. Preaching and Bible-reading will together have gone down. But the corpses will lie, like the corpse of the Saviour shut in the sepulchre loaned by Joseph of Arimathea. Faithful women and mourning apostles came to embalm the Redeemer. No mourning, but wild revelling, will shake the nations over the two witnesses laid unburied in the streets of the great city. But the earth shall hold its merry-making, and send its mocking gifts over the remains of the two prophets that had tormented the earth for a brief space only. Then shifts the scene.

Amid the riot and the din of the universal triumph, the Spirit, who needs not man and waits not for man, will but have waited the predestined and narrow bound for the great and outbreking gush of terrene and infernal

enmity to display its strength. Three days and three nights were the limit of the Saviour's own subjection to the tomb. Three days and a half—literal or figurative time—will be the space and breadth for the seeming abolition of Bible and ministry. The light blazes again ; it is the light of doom. Where the voice of worldly hate had been, "Lie there and rot," comes now a voice, falling from the skies. It is, "Come up hither."

The churches of Christ have their toils and their inevitable sufferings ; but their ultimate lot is translation to the celestial city. The Scriptures, gathering new evidence from every storm of Antichristian proscription, and of skeptical derision and blasphemy, which they have encountered or shall yet encounter, are not to be deserted and disclaimed by their Author, throned on high. The record, true here, shall be remembered and explained more vividly and resplendently there. The true heralds of the cross, working not for gain or power or worldly praise, if truly anointed of God, shall have their record and reward on high.

And in that fair city, of which Christ is both the Temple and Light, it shall be seen, that thrice blessed were the Bible telling on earth of the salvation, the pulpits vocal in earth's many dialects of this our faith, and the churches who, pondering those oracles and heeding those teachers, pass ultimately from the lesser and dimmer beamings of earth, to the cloudless and perpetual splendor of the Beatific Vision.





V.

OUR CHURCHES

UNDER THE BAN OF ANTICHRIST.



# OUR CHURCHES

## UNDER THE BAN OF ANTICHRIST.

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It was, but a few years since, said by a distinguished English convert to Romanism, Archbishop Manning, who has more recently been made a cardinal, when speaking of the communion to which he had attached himself, that "men now acknowledge it to be either Christ or Antichrist."\* A few lines after he adds: "The Catholic Church is either the masterpiece of Satan or the kingdom of the Son of God;" yet a few pages farther on he represents men as concluding in its favor, "though at first they think the church of Jesus Christ to be Antichrist."

Familiar as is the term to the readers of the New Testament, so ghastly is the shadow it is there made to cast upon the purity and growth of Christ's true churches, that some in our own times dread allusion to the phrase even, as bringing back controversies which have rent nations and guttered more than one region of the earth as with rivers of blood. But if the beloved disciple testified that there were even then many Antichrists come into the world, warning, however, that another, more vast and heinous, was to

\* *Lect. on the Fourfold Sovereignty of God*, Lond. 1871, p. 171.

come, whose full manifestation was hindered, or, in the old English phrase, "*letted*," by a power yet dominant—if, as the old Fathers held, the power so obstructing was the great pagan empire of Rome, it is matter of moment to the student of history and the reverent tracker of the course of the Divine Providence in the rule of nations to ascertain what great influence for evil grew up into its ill-omened dominion on the waning and overthrow of the old Paganism of the great heathen empire. If Hobbes, the old infidel of the days of the Commonwealth and the Restoration, said, with that command of pithy English of which his writings afford many a specimen, that Papal Rome was but the ghost of the old Roman Paganism sitting crowned on the sepulchre of the early heathen dominion, the wording might be his, but the thought was one familiar to all the schools of European Protestantism. The martyrs of Southern France and Northern Italy, of Holland and Germany and England, of Bohemia and Scotland, in the study of their Bibles, had learned to pronounce the great power claimed and wielded by the Roman Church, the New Testament Babylon, the mother of abominations, to be the counterfeit and antagonist of Christ. Bishop Cox, one of the compilers of the Liturgy of the Anglican Established Church, writing from England in 1559, whilst Elizabeth filled the throne, to friends on the Continent, says, "We . . . are thundering forth in our pulpits, and especially before our queen Elizabeth, that the Roman pontiff is truly Antichrist." A nobleman of that house of Russell which, so early and so long, has distinguished itself for zeal in the behalf of Protestantism, the Earl of Bedford, in the next year, 1560,

writing to Gualter, a Swiss Reformer, prays that Christ may prosper the Swiss Christians in their endeavors to "destroy the kingdom of Satan, the pomp of the world, and the power of Antichrist."

On the other hand, a Roman Catholic gentleman, Ambrose Lisle Philippe, of Grace Dieu Manor, about twenty years ago published a volume intended to prove Mohammed the great enemy of truth who was veiled under this portentous title. One of the most learned of all volumes on these topics is that in folio of the Spanish Dominican Malvenda. Born only about six years after Cox had so designated the wearer of the tiara, his results are, of course, far different from those of the various confessors and martyrs that his own Roman Church had disowned as heretics, and his own Dominican order had racked, immured, and burned as heretical blasphemers. The question is one long litigated, but it cannot be banished if the great Head of the church is to be regarded as not a mere alarmist when warning against the false Christs that should come in his own name and deceive many. And if to his servant in Patmos he gave images so startling of the spiritual powers that should beset his people, we may well believe that those of his followers best serve him on earth and those most surely win his welcome in heaven who take early and reverent heed to these oracles of his framing, nor walk into snares against which he has fore-armed them.

It is part of the Master's blessed provision for the spiritual needs of his discipleship, down to the day of his own return in the glistening cloud and on the white

throne, that he has, in the brief tome of his New Testament, a book that the schoolboy's wallet, and the soldier's knapsack, and the sailor's chest may so easily stow—that in these pages, to which the dying turn for glimpses of the world beyond the grave as it yawns so near, and in which the bereaved catch, amid their falling tears, hope for the vanished kindred who have left home desolate—he, the Lord of the centuries, should have placed so conspicuously and thundered so emphatically along the whole onrolling course of those centuries his warning—sad boding and stern—that we receive not every claim to spiritual dominion, even though the world, the whole world, for the time, go wandering after it, and though the Man of Sin throne himself for a time in the very temple of God, giving himself out as God. As Manning, the companion of John Henry Newman in departure from the British Establishment, and, though not the peer of Newman in learning, logic, or intellectual power, far, probably, his superior in popularity, elegance of style, and sway of hearts as a preacher,—as, we say, Manning has put it tersely and plainly before the English-speaking Christians of the round world, the question becomes a very significant and urgent one: the King of heaven or the masterpiece of Tophet; the Christ the Truth, or the Antichrist the huge Untruth.

In an old German pamphlet, issued by Roman Catholic writers of the Continent, and intended to warn against prevalent heresies, whilst Luther was comparatively obscure—for he is not named in it; and the strength of the denunciation in which is against the Waldensians and



the Poor Men of Lyons, and the followers of the English Wycliffe, and the Bohemian Huss—it is said of these Poor Men of Lyons, that they “*regard the Ban as their own everlasting benediction.*”\* By the word Ban—fallen practically, with the shrunken powers of the hierarchy, into disuse—was meant in ancient times the power publicly and solemnly to curse. It delivered over the individual heretic to excommunication, banishment, prison, or death; and the land it laid under an interdict, abolishing in it, for the time, all holy offices, and smiting service and worshippers as with a moral paralysis, and—if the Saxon phrase be permitted us—as with a spiritual lockjaw, that hindered further movement, and, if left unrelieved, would bring on utter death.

The Waldensians this Roman Catholic pamphlet represents as claiming that they had been in the world since the days of the first Pope Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine, when the fatal bounty and patronage of this emperor had corrupted and secularized the church, as Waldensians held. That is, far back as the closing of the third and opening of the fourth Christian century, the Waldensians dated the fatal wrench and blight. Denying their full antiquity, but allowing that they, the Waldensians, had been in the world more than three hundred and fifty years, they, the Roman Catholics, charge on these Waldensians the heretical statement, that true priestly orders had gone from the Roman Catholic Church, far back as the days when Constantine endowed her, and when Sylvester received the imperial recognition as pri-

\* *Artikel um Ursprung* (1524).

mate over the church. Prayers for the dead, purgatory, prayers to the saints, pilgrimages, jubilees, burial in consecrated ground, and the use of oaths, they charge the Waldensians with denying. To the Poor Men of Lyons, they impute the assertion, that the Roman Church is the Harlot of Babylon; that all the new laws made for the church, since Christ's ascension to heaven, are unauthorized and valueless; that true baptism comes only after belief, personally; and that Infant Baptism is to be rejected. To Wycliffe, the pamphlet imputes the sentiment, that to ban a man, a bishop must know that God has first banned him; and that, banning another without such personal knowledge, the prelate makes himself a heretic; that the men who, in dread of man's ban, turn from hearing God's word preached, are themselves banned, and at the day of judgment will be doomed as traitors against God; that bans of the pope and his bishops are not to be heeded, for they are but judgments of Antichrist. The pamphlet closes with the decrees of the Council of Constance (A. D. 1414) condemning such heresies, and sending Huss and Jerome to the fire.

The yellow quarto tract of some eight leaves, in its rude black type, is thus like some dark thunder-cloud swollen with portents of doom. But, itself three hundred and fifty years old, and allowing to the Waldensians in that age a history actually three hundred and fifty years back, or seven centuries from our times, it cites, though it disputes, the Waldensian statement, that they came from the days of Sylvester, or a time when Constantine, by enriching, had, as Dante also complained, secularized the church.

The Catholic accusers allowed them an antiquity of three hundred and fifty years; the Waldensians claimed a real antiquity of twelve centuries, or nearly nine centuries more than their persecutors granted them.

Now, Neander, Hebrew in blood, but Christian eminently in spirit, of vast erudition and greatest candor, says \* that it is not without some foundation of truth that this claim of the Waldensians goes back far as the times of Sylvester and Constantine's gift. Of one of the old Waldensian manuscripts, claiming to be of the year A. D. 1120, and having as its theme Antichrist, Neander says that it belongs certainly to the twelfth century.† Rainerius, once himself a member of the Catharist or heretical community, afterward a persecutor, traces them back to Sylvester's times, and to the apostles even.‡ These Waldensians held Antichrist, in his early stages and ages, to have been "mute." It was their striking phrase for his slow development, and the growing boldness of his utterances, and the wide sweep of his later assumptions. In the imagery of the Apocalypse, the evil influence had been "letted"—cribbed and hemmed in—by adverse powers that it was to survive, and finally to eliminate and to supersede. As Hobbes phrased it, the ghost of the pontificate sate crowned on the tomb of the empire.

A man of earlier times than those of Neander, the saintly Leighton, holds of the Waldensian church this language:§ "The devil, crafty as he is, makes use, again and again, of his old inventions, and makes them serve

\* Bohn's ed., London, viii., 351, 352. † *Ibid.*, 352. ‡ *Ib.*, 352, n.

§ *Works*, Pearson's ed., London, 1828, vol. i., p. 285.

in several ages; for so were the Waldenses accused of inhuman banqueting . . . and divers things not once to be named among Christians, much less to be practiced by them." Just, in other words, as old Paganism libelled the first Christians as grossly wicked, so the persecutors of later believers maligned, before they martyred, many of their victims. Bossuet, however, allows the moral exaltation of the Waldenses, though he will not admit the like to be true of the Albigenses.

It is not claimed that our denominational views were universal among the Waldenses. There were—as readers of ecclesiastical history, entirely independent, and far removed in position from each other as are our own Robert Hall and Schleiermacher of Germany, have agreed in judging—some of the Waldensian Christians who upheld, and others who rejected Infant Baptism. So there were also, among the Lollards, or early English followers of Wycliffe, some who followed out the results of Wycliffe's principles, in the study of the vernacular Scriptures, to the conclusion that baptism went with faith, and that infants, not capable of exercising the one, should not receive the other. Rastell, one of the judges of England in the days of Queen Mary, has preserved in his *Entrees* legal documents coming down, some of them, from his grandfather, Sir John More, a justice of the King's Bench, and father of the illustrious chancellor, Sir Thomas More. In this volume, Rastell has preserved a Latin writ, sending over to the bishop for judgment, according to the canon law, three several groups of Lollards, who all rejected Infant Baptism. The date he has

not given; it might have been the time when his grandfather served on the bench, or when he, the grandson, accepted a similar post in the days of Queen Mary, on whose death the doughty Romanist sought refuge on the Continent, dying at Louvain. From the designation of Lollard given to the errorists, the earlier date of the time of Rastell's grandfather, the elder More, would seem the more probable. Gross immoralities are also imputed to two groups of the three. But we know how carelessly, cruelly, and falsely both pagan and papal Rome showered such accusations against their innocent victims. And a reader of ecclesiastical history soon finds that crude but justly-founded criticisms of the heretic against the marriage services and practices of the dominant church were, by the priesthood whose services and fees were so impeached, wrested most perversely to bear a meaning which the righteous dissident never held. But one, who had personally known Wycliffe and sympathized with early Lollardism in England, but afterward left that communion, gave as the reason, that among other errors the Lollard followers of the great Reformer at Lutterworth rejected the baptism of infants.

In the vast hecatombs that sealed their faith with their blood, it is now impossible to trace out the exact ecclesiastical tenets, and church relations, of the sufferers who gave home, freedom, property, and life, to the cause of the Master. But, amid the sufferers under Alva, when the Netherlands were so drenched with human gore, multitudes were of our faith; and they had their share, in that land, in early versions of the Scriptures for the general



use of the faithful. The followers of Henry de Bruis, at an earlier day in the history of France, were with us, on this topic of Christian faith and duty. Indeed, many of the Holland Mennonites hold the Waldensians to have been the first propagandists, on Holland soil, of these views, in their flight northward from persecution in France and Italy. It has been said by one of the early Mennonite writers, that the oldest families of the Mennonites, in certain towns of Holland, had names of Waldensian origin, and claimed to be the progeny of such exiled forefathers. Venema, himself a Pedobaptist, living in Holland, a theologian and scholar of such eminence that Adam Clarke, the British Methodist, said of his, Venema's, Commentary on the Psalms, that it was a Goliath's sword as described by David, "There was none like it:"—this eminent scholar, beyond the reach of denominational bias, and speaking of the ancient history of his own country, ascribes to the Baptists of Holland an origin earlier than the time of the Münster orgies, where too many would fain place their cradle. Mosheim, a Pedobaptist and a German, places our origin far back. Ypeij and Dermout, members of the Established Presbyterian Church of Holland, in their history of that, their own national church, put our origin as a people beyond the age of the Protestant Reformation.

What was there, in the position and traits of our churches, to bring upon them the ban, in its heavy and burning severity?

They insisted much upon the power of the Spirit, as the great Conservator and Guardian of the life of the Christian



church. Now, far back as the days of Montanism, this was offensive to the Christian churches, who became, under power and wealth and fashion, secularized and corrupted. The Comte de Champagny—who has written, though an Ultramontane Catholic, so eloquently and eruditely, on the early history of Christianity, and the collision of it with Judaism on the one side and Paganism on the other side—has said of the Montanists, that it was hard to find doctrinal error in their views; that they were rather like Jansenists or Methodists, in their high views of religious emotion and experience. They were accused of claiming inspiration, when they intended, probably, only, like the early followers of Cameron among the Covenanters, or of Wesley among the English Methodists, the true experience of God's work in the individual soul. Out of Montanism came Tertullian, early protesting against the precipitating of Infant Baptism. So the Donatists made, in after times, a like testimony against worldliness; and Bishop Latimer, himself in later years a martyr, speaking of some Anabaptist martyrs from Holland, who went to the stake in England with heroic cheer and joy, was struck with a parallel of which he does not seem to have discovered all the force; and makes the remark, that these glad sufferers at the stake were but like those old heretics, the Donatists of early ages. The Paulicians, a later body, were eminent especially for their love of Paul's Epistles, which they so admired, that their teachers, many of them, changed their original names for those of some of Paul's helpers and converts. For centuries defamed and pursued, they held their course, testify-

ing and witnessing. Hasé, the modern church historian, himself a Rationalist, speaks of them, as continuing under various names down quite near to our own age, in the neighborhood of Mount Haemus, or the Balkan Mountains in European Turkey, and in the vicinity of Philippopolis, the very town to which the recent atrocities of Turks, in Bulgaria, have drawn such general and such indignant sympathy.

Now, in the imagery of the Apocalypse, God described his own people as hidden in the wilderness. What the Omniscient conceals, it will be found generally rather difficult for short-sighted science, or mankind at large, to explain and to make clear. To hide from our haughtiness occasions of boasting and self-reliance, to take the wise in their own craftiness, he has more than once allowed the powers of earth to sweep the stage, as for their own sole and uncontested occupancy, that, doing as it might be their best, or doing as it might be their worst, he should, in the hour when wrong seemed dominant and error vaunted itself incontrovertible, flash in upon the maskers and the revellers, from some unexpected nook, with the torch of Scripture, the enkindled glare of an awakened conscience, and the trumpet blare of a long-forgotten prophecy. The world, "by wisdom, knew not God." The last results of a godless science were to evaporate Revelation, and to precipitate the dead, flavorless residue of an infinite and an irremediable despair. The world, in the guise of the Church, has, by power, extruded Scripture and banned Reform, and, with martyr-fires streaming their smoke heavenward, asked, Who now shall confront

the Sovereign, and impeach the Infallible;—unlock the buried oracles, and dare the leaping interdict that comes down from Christ's Vicegerent? God had but to breathe forth his Spirit, to touch the multiform and noiseless keys of his own omnipresent providence, and what was the result? The Bible leaped from the dusty shelf and the dead tongues, into homes and marts, into dialects that never before had even been written. As from the ashes of the stake, the enfranchised faith blew itself, an invisible, irresistible influence, across continents and oceans; the Bible of 1877 has a hold on the ears and a seal on the lips of the nations, East and West, North and South, such as no book ever before attained. If the Spirit go with it, who shall say, that we have begun yet to see the outskirts of the glorious effects which it is predestined ultimately to achieve?

Our churches have held that the Spirit, blowing where it listeth, goes not in the line of a hereditary order, or upon the branches of a family pedigree; that the Paraclete may call its peasant and artisan messengers apart from the ranks of the lettered and refined. By so doing, they incurred in Britain, in Holland and Bohemia, in Southern France, the ban, fierce and summary. But the providence of God and the history of the churches have vindicated the righteousness of the claim. He who, on Pentecost, anointed the fishermen apostles, and sent a tent-maker to teach the men of the Areopagus wisdom, and the Cæsars of Rome duty and responsibility, has not been at a loss for Bunyans and Careys in days nearer our own. And they, who undertake to ban, athwart the

descending sheets of the flaming influences of this Divine Paraclete, may find that, like the benediction pronounced on the invincible Armada of Spain, and the acclaim given the French massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, and the shelter cast over the atrocities of Savoy in the valleys of Piedmont, and the applause lavished on the faithless revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the sympathy assured the late Napoleon raid on Germany, and the patronage vouchsafed to the assumption of the hapless Maximilian as against Mexico,—there was something to have been learned, that has been rather strangely overlooked. in what many centuries ago had been said by a very wise prophet of old: "He hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it." Balaam, from the hills of Moab, was in the right. God's providence, and the conscience of the race, and the verdict of history, and the streaming might of the Holy Ghost, are not, when they bless, easily reversed, even by the wearer of infallibility, assuming to speak in the name and guise of the vicegerent of Christ.

Nay, in the wise providence of God, the very tightenings of old bonds, that were once worn more loosely, by strain put on the authority of the pontifical church, in the new denunciations of the Syllabus; the honor and the influence lavished on orders that have heretofore wielded power on so many broad theatres, and proved so disastrously in the past the mingled temerity and brittleness of their policy, are all of them, to the thoughtful Protestant, among the grand auguries of hope. The Jesuit order never, with all its literary culture and mental acuteness, accomplished a plausible and enduring re-

sponse, to the terrible impeachment of its morals and its casuistry by a Pascal and an Arnauld and their immortal allies in the great Port Royal movement. They aided, as an order, in the mission fields of Canada and Western America, of Brazil and China, and of Japan, with immense expenditures of talents and treasure; and yet with what abiding result from the efforts of a Xavier and an Anchieta, a Jogues and a Beschi? The poetic labors of the last remain, and his catechism; but what a haze rests on the great success attributed to the greatest of their missionary champions, Francis Xavier himself. As to their mission to the courts of princes, and to the cabinets of statesmen, how powerfully did their hands move the secret springs of strategy and statecraft on the European field. And what was the result of the labors that revolutionized Poland, that dragooned Huguenotism out of France, and that educated in its colleges there a D'Alembert, and a Diderot, and a Voltaire?

Restored, they claim to dictate the theology and the policy of the present occupant of the pontifical chair. Is there aught in the annals of the ages past; is there aught in the present aspect of the passing age, now around us, to make their hold on the helm of the ship other than one full of dread for the sober and the thoughtful of their co-religionists, and of cause of hope and sanguine trust on the part of those who cherish the memory of the Protestant Reformation and its martyrs? That policy, which, according to the principles of Loyola, gathers all wills and all consciences as into the single brain and the single conscience of the general of the Order, is indeed

fearful in its energetic concentration and in its promptitude and in its persistency. But has not God made men, individually, each with a conscience of his own, and each to render an account for himself?

And when this selfhood and this individualism is surrendered to the control, unquestioned and uncontrolled, of another, a mortal—not beyond the reach of self-will and shortsightedness and audacity and delusion—has the reader of the Bible, and the believer in the sovereignty of God alone and God for evermore, any other interpretation than that a policy, thus shaped on the principle of giving up to a fellow-mortal the prerogatives due only to a God, must have its result in wide but transient power, yet followed by ultimate and inevitable and irreparable wrecks?

They did not make the Gunpowder Plot a success; they did not make the Restoration of Romanism in England under James II. a success; they did not make the overthrow of Protestantism, and the cancelment of the pledges of Henry of Navarre, as given to his old fellow-Protestants, to a Sully and a Mornay du Plessis and a Noue of the Iron Hand, a success. And whilst we wish no man evil for his soul, we do rejoice, unfeignedly, that to an influence, so plausible, so grasping, and so bound to failure, is now entrusted the sway of the pontifical cabinet, and the keeping of the conscience of the spiritual monarch, who has arrogated infallibility, and hopes to make the claim, in the hands of his successors, if not of himself, a grand reality.

Our True Lord, the Only and Irreplacable Ruler, has not been wont to trust the reins of ultimate sovereignty to



Phaëthons, bound to hurl the chariots which they drive over the precipice. The enterprises which we see, under the names of Infallibility and Divinity, given over to such conduct, we may very calmly and confidently believe are not, in car-builder or driver or banner, schemes that the Christ has warranted. We will not, far as in us lies, surrender soul, church, or people to such guidance. The Invincible Armada shall not be aided to repeat in the nineteenth century the experiment of the sixteenth, and to make a second disastrous demonstration of its invincibility by our co-operation on our Western shores, although the Old Unerring Voice launches out its solemn benediction on all helpers, and thunders forth its awful ban on all doubters and opposers.

The Crusades and the Inquisition; the auto-da-fé; "the Index of Prohibited Books;" the graves of so many myriads of martyrs; the libraries of so many literatures; the presses of so many languages,—all proclaim, as with one sad utterance, the old lament of Balaam: We could not reverse what God has blessed.

Has God no blessing for the devout Catholic? Far be it from us to cherish such a thought. An A Kempis and a Fenelon, a Borromeo, a De Sacy, a Blaise Pascal, and an Angelique Arnauld and her brothers, are memories dear to Christians of other confessions. Tregelles, because of such piety in individual Catholics, was unwilling to admit the interpretation of the prophecies of the Scriptures respecting Antichrist and the Man of Sin as being intended for the papal church. But when God says respecting the mystical New Testament Babylon, Come out of

her, my people, it is implied that her awful errors and her fearful end are not inconsistent with the presence of true piety in some individuals of her fellowship. The Babylon of the Old Testament was denounced by God's seers and foredoomed to an awful overthrow. Yet some have supposed that Nebuchadnezzar, her Chaldean king, was a true penitent, and that Cyrus, her Persian conqueror, was not ignorant of the true God. Of this we know nothing, and would judge dubiously. But supposing the eternal escape of either of these Babylonish sovereigns, and remembering God's care of the thousands in heathen Nineveh that knew not the right hand from the left, did these except, lessen, or parry the swoop of the tremendous ban that Heaven launched as against both pagan capitals?

When God told Jeremiah to show his faith in the future and pledged return of Israel from the Babylonian captivity, he bade the prophet to bury the evidences of the field which he had purchased, the title-deeds of his new property in Anathoth, in the ground. After many days the earth, his registry-office, was to be disturbed, and to give up its custody of these records of divine veracity and of the prophet's persistent patriotic confidence. So God has placed on the martyrs that papal Rome has made, and on the blessed memories which, far as she could, she defamed and blackened, the assurance of his coming vengeance. As Milton and as Vane saw in their day, there is to be a resurrection of the reputation of God's people, as there is, in the last day, to be a resurrection of their mouldered dust. It has been true in our own times of a Cromwell. Hume, scoffingly and derisively, told how strange a compilation

would be that of the letters and speeches of the Protector; Carlyle, not a bigoted religionist, whatever else may be his claims, has made such a gathering of the Protector's correspondence and oratory; and its effect, even in the judgment of enemies, is to clear and exalt the wisdom and the energy and the religious earnestness of the great Protector, England's greatest ruler.

God suffered the evidence against Roman Paganism, in the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, to slumber for many centuries. He exhumed them, and they justify the Epistle of Paul to the Romans in its dread impeachment of the manners of classic antiquity. He buried Egypt and Chaldea and Assyria, and the very keys of the strange inscriptions were lost. These have been disinterred. The hieroglyphic and arrow-headed characters have been read, after the lapse of so many centuries; and, as out of Jeremiah's earthen urn emerged the evidence of the prophet's ownership, so has it been that out of these graves of the ancient and the mysterious and the forgotten he has illustrated more luminously the truth of his nature and the certainty of his prophecies. Thus in the past, so shall it ever be in the long dim future. Our God is in one mind, and who can turn him?



VI.  
ANABAPTISTS  
OF THE  
CONTINENT AND ENGLAND





# ANABAPTISTS

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IN every great movement that awakens keen feeling over a wide region, and calls into collision opposing interests and rival classes in a nation, it is not cause of surprise, that good men should find themselves jostled by men of exceeding wickedness. Napoleon was wont to speak of himself as opening a career to all the talents. Intellect and merit found spread clear before them a free pathway. But all the talents might be elbowed in the race, and find themselves distanced at the goal, by "all the vices;" and the reptile has wriggled to heights where the lion could scarcely find foothold, or the eagle even a place to perch.

A Bible having been opened before the people, that each in his own tongue might read; the summons having gone forth, that each man for himself seek God's Spirit, and go, for pardon and renewal, beyond ordinances and fanes, indulgences and jubilees, direct to the One Mediator Christ; the truth having been taught that, in Christ's church, discipline and rule, or, as it was called, "the power of the keys," belonged to all the membership,—

this was a change that must work a great moral revolution. Our Lord himself described his own advent, Prince of peace though he was, as bringing a sword into the world. Portions of the community, before mutually repellent, became soon and early leagued for his destruction. So a Paul found himself confronted by false apostles; and a John, the last surviving apostle, before adding the final pages to the New Testament, must warn the flock, amid the baying of Persecution all around them, that there were, also, within the nominal fold, many Antichrists already come into the world. So it has been the fact, in political as well as in religious changes. The name of Republic, dear to us, has had in other lands its sinister aspects and its odious memories. Even as shaped in the imagination of a thinker like Plato, it had repulsive features, from which men who loved the purity and order of home might well shrink appalled. And in times nearer to our own than are the times of the old Greek sage, how much was there in the Reign of Terror of the first great revolutionary republic of France; and in the Communitistic havoc and rapine of the very recent outbreak in that great nation,—we repeat, how much was there that would give,—to one who recalled Marat and Robespierre, and who had heard Proudhon's cry, that "Property was robbery," and who mused on democracy thus formulated,—only feelings of distrust and strongest aversion.

The Christian church saw itself, in very early years, simulated and haunted by rival and corrupt bodies; first the Gnostic and then the Manichean, that had, in the eyes of the persecuting pagan government, the same names and

ordinances, and used partially the same Scriptures with the genuine churches, yet from whom the true believer turned in indignant terror and holy detestation. See the volumes, learned and elaborate, that Matter, the French scholar, launched, and that appeared posthumously from the British thinker, Dean Mansel, on these Gnostics; and the bulky tomes compiled by the old Huguenot refugee Beausobre on the Manichees. Were these books on the Gnostics and the Manichees to be courteously laid before an ingenuous student, wishing to know the first annals of Christ's people on the earth; and were he told, that in these he might find the unhappy and soiled cradle-wrappings of an infant Christianity, before it had strength to become just and true and orderly and reverent,—he might well be disturbed at the covert impeachment. Yet some modern scholars, in stating the earlier aspect of our own Baptist churches, gravely adduce the annals of the madmen of Münster and of the Peasant War of Germany, as if we here began; whilst they kindly allow, that we have, as a people, become ameliorated in the lapse of years, having outgrown and renounced these excesses of a riotous and atrocious childhood. When Dryden, after his own conversion to the Roman Church in the days of the Romanist king, James II., depicted the Episcopal Church which he had left, it was under the image of the panther, sleek, spotted, and treacherous; and the Roman communion which he had joined, it was as the harmless, spotted hind; but for the Anabaptist he reserved the symbol of the wild boar of the forest, rough, savage, and headlong. The heraldry of printer, painter, and poet is of little au-

thority in settling a question of history. But the old Waldensians adopted as their emblem a branched candlestick, with the motto, "Light in the Darkness." As a guide for the erring, and a rebuke for the lover of darkness, their history had not belied their symbol. And the old Mennonite Bible, printed and circulated in the vernacular language of Holland, years before Alva commenced his career of multitudinous massacre in that country, had in its front page, in either of the two Testaments, the expressive emblem of a lily fenced with a framework of thorns, and its motto from Solomon, "A lily among thorns." And, in either case, we must hold, that flower and candle well fitted the truly written history of our elder brothers in the valleys of Piedmont, in Bohemia and Moravia, and in Holland. Their mission was benign and rich in benediction.

We alluded to Venema, a Pedobaptist scholar resident in Holland, and writing without the bias of attachment to our own body. He has said,\* "The immediate origin of the Mennonites is, in my judgment, more justly to be traced to the Waldensians and to those of the Anabaptists who wished a renewal of the innocence and purity of the primitive church, and that the reformation of the church should be carried farther than Luther and Calvin had arranged it. The Waldensians, apart from the question as to the origin of Christ's human nature, in the chief articles had, in almost all things, like views with the Mennonites, as is evident from their history as (I) stated (it) in the twelfth century. . . . To find other beginnings as

\* T. vii. Hist. Eccles. Sæcul. xvi. p. 443, Lugd. Bat. 1783.

the source of Mennonitism is needless, much less those invidious ones, placing them in fellowship with the men of Münster and other like fanatics. From these they cleared themselves, both in old time, and now through a long space of years have so vindicated and justified themselves, in life and institutions, that longer to confound them with that class can be done only by notable injustice and gravest insult."

The word "Anabaptist" is of an antiquity far preceding the times of the great Reformation. But it acquired its portentous and repulsive sound, especially as applied to men whose career was begun after Luther's, and mainly in that Germany where the great Reformer wielded his largest and most enduring influence. God had his true witnesses before he raised up the monk of Erfurt and the translator and teacher of Wittenberg. When Zwingli of Switzerland and Luther of Germany were yet children in the nursery or boys in the school-room; in 1487—whilst Martin the miner's son was but a child—the Pontiff had found it necessary to preach a crusade against the Waldensians, encouraging the warriors by the promise of a plenary indulgence given them for taking part in the butcheries. In 1500, at the opening of the century, when Martin was ignorant as yet of the Bible and soon to enter an Augustinian monastery, the Moravian brethren possessed two hundred places of worship.\* They were the inheritors of the labors of Huss and Jerome, of British Lollards, of Wycliffe and Waldo, and laborers yet earlier than these, whose memories and whose reward are safe

\* Riddle's Eccles. Chronology, p. 320.

with the God whom they meekly and faithfully served, and then went down unrecorded by their fellows to a forgotten or a dishonored grave.

Without a press; holding their assemblies, over a large portion of their field and through a long tract of their history, in private residences, and in such manner as to evade the eye of the official and the informer—they relied, for the diffusion of the truth as they had received it, on personal appeal; on the intercourse of travel, whereby much of the commerce of the age was transacted, as by visits to fairs and by long journeys on foot; on the exchange of kindly offices with the stranger and the needy. As an old pagan satirist had, by an expressive graphic phrase, described the early Christians as “Christ peddlers,” so were these men, who, like the itinerant trader with shop in the pack on his shoulders, carried about their faith and the testimony of their one Hope and Redeemer. Even thus the Waldensians are picturesquely described as making their petty industries, the humble knapsack strapped behind them, the channels through which they commended, to those who showed any temper of seriousness, the Bible, of which many of these humble Christians had committed whole books to memory; and whilst showing other ornaments, they praised the jewel of a good hope in him; and thus with the pathos of experience they urged on the sad, the bereaved, and the thoughtful, great truths in fraternal simplicity and earnestness. Scant as in that age literature was in comparison with its present redundancy, the treatises and notices of the age, written often by their enemies, yet attest the wide currency



of the message and the far-drawn circuit and scope of the evangelical itinerant.

When Luther was, in God's providence, raised up to do his great work, he found, in more than one quarter of Europe, those who had preceded him, and into whose labors and testimony he in some sense entered. His seed sank into soil made ready by their tears and prayers and martyr-blood. In 1524, Casper Tauber, in Vienna, ended at the stake a Christian life. He was one whom Luther ranks with others, who, as he says, became "brilliant lights by their glorious deaths, wherein they have offered to God a sacrifice of sweet savor." There was another worthy of like views and the same age, Balthasar Hubmeier. He had been a pupil of Eck, the antagonist of Luther, and was, as a scholar and a preacher, a man of more than vulgar endowments. Under the influence of Luther's writings he became an adherent of the Reformation, and in his pastoral charges won, under God's blessing, hearers and proselytes. He went beyond Luther, however, to the rejection of Infant Baptism; and so wide was his power, that Chemnitz, whom Bossuet ranks as among the greatest of Protestant theologians, in his, *Chemnitz's Examination of the Council of Trent*, quotes Hubmeier as the greatest of the Anabaptist body. Martin Duncan, a Roman Catholic priest of Holland, who in Menno's lifetime impeached his views, is doubtful whether he should regard Hubmeier or Menno as founder of the heretical body. He seems to have been somewhat like Luther in his aptitude for sharp, pithy sayings, that, like barbed arrows, stayed where they struck. Speaking,

for instance, of the impossibility of finding the papal doctrine of Purgatory in any part of the Bible, he says it is like the grave of Moses, which can never and nowhere be found. Driven from post to post, he was such an object of priestly and princely dread, that the Catholic sovereign of Austria made his surrender a condition of peace, with subjects who had been compelled to yield to the emperor's superior power. Brought like Tauber to Vienna, the capital of Austria, to make his final sacrifice, he was, with all his holy resolution, and cheerfulness even, a sufferer, being burned to death. His pious wife, who heartened her husband to constancy, was drowned. Led on the 10th of March, 1528, four years after Tauber, to the place of burning, he kneeled, and lifting his eyes heavenward prayed: "O my gracious God, grant me patience in my suffering. My Father, I thank thee, that to-day thou wilt lift me from this valley of sorrows. With joy I die, that I may come to thee, Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world. My God, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Turning to the bystanders, he begged, that if, in word or deed, he had offended any, he might for God's sake be forgiven. He spoke his own forgiveness of all who might have ill-treated him. The executioner rubbed, when preparing him for the death, into the martyr's long beard, saltpetre and gunpowder. Smilingly cried this confessor, "Salt me well, now; salt me well." Then, again facing the multitude, he said, "Dear brethren, pray for me, that God give me patience in my suffering: in my Christian faith I will die." Amid the explosion and the flames was heard the cry, "Jesus!" and the smoke and

the fire suffocated Balthasar Hubmeier. Sprugel, the Roman Catholic dean of the University of Vienna, attested, that, to the end, men saw only joy and bright cheer in his face. Many of the bystanders melted into tears. His faithful wife, who had before her conversion been a Roman Catholic nun, in bidding farewell to her husband, adjured him to abide faithful to death. Three days after her husband's oblation, on the 13th of March, 1528, she was brought to the bridge over the Danube, and, with a heavy stone bound to her neck, she was hurled into its stream. The old river has many a memory. The time is coming when this shall be among its illustrations.

It was not until thirty-five years after, or the lifetime of a full generation, in 1563, that there left a Holland press the Mennonite Bible now before us, bearing on its front the emblem of the lily amid thorns.

Was not Hubmeier's brave widow, encircled by her murderers, such saintly flower? Eleven days after her death, or a full fortnight after the sacrifice of their pastor, on the 24th of the month, were burned two of his followers, one a shoemaker, the other a peasant, who at the funeral pyre sung aloud a hymn invoking God, the Holy Ghost, to come down. The pious of our own day, reading the record, feels yet the downward rush of the Hallowing Influence thus invoked. Hubmeier's writings, as well as his oral preachments, were so numerous and effective, that on the Index of the prohibited books of the Papal Church his name appears, in some editions, in no less than four different forms, as author of works only fit for the flames. Now, among these writings, thus denounced, yet in some

copies surviving this stern process of destruction, is one on the burning "Of Heretics," in which he had taken ground against the right of worldly governments to compel religious obedience by such punishments. More than a century before the days of Roger Williams this German author had delivered his testimony; and husband and wife, by fire and by flood, had sealed their cheerful and fearless protest for Christ's truth and for the secular freedom of Christ's church.

In the days when Hubmeier wrote and preached, there wrote and preached another Baptist, whose name is more generally known, though intellectually not Hubmeier's peer; it was Thomas Münzer. His name is by some confounded with the city Münster, with which are identified far darker memories. But that city in Westphalia was far from the German towns where Münzer labored, and it did not emerge into notice in the Anabaptist tumults until some years after; as Münzer died in 1525, and the Münster Revolt was in 1534, nine years after his beheading.

Münzer had gone beyond the rejection of Infant Baptism. The doctrine of equality in the rule of the church, as belonging to all members, led him to sympathize with the Peasants' War, the twelve articles of which were in the beginning so moderate and just that Voltaire said, a Lycurgus would have signed them. Niebuhr, the critical historian of Rome, said, the peasants adopting those articles were in the beginning in the right. Bunsen, the late ambassador of Prussia to England, a civilian himself of high standing, has said of the same document, "As to

what they demanded in their twelve articles, all impartial historians declare, that, on the whole, their demands were just; and all of them are now the law of Germany." This is the language of a German jurist and scholar naturally leaning on the side of the aristocratic and ruling classes. The words appear in his article on Luther, contributed to the last (eighth) edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Vericour, a scholar of Guizot, and dedicating to his teacher his work on *Christian Civilization*, has said, that all later historians have taken a more favorable view, than did the earlier writers, of Münzer's character. But he erred, as a religious teacher, in taking what he called the "sword of Gideon;" and in so far making his sympathies with the oppressed peasantry practical, political, and indiscriminate, that he became involved in measures of revolt and anarchy which he never probably contemplated in the beginning of the movement. He was executed, and the rabble of the undisciplined peasantry easily routed, but in his death-scene he warned the princes against cruel and unjust dealing with the populace.

Along with the views of the right of the people to a larger relief from tyrannical exactions, there had been spread in Germany and in Friesland, a northern portion of Holland, and in Switzerland, a general expectation of the near approach of the millennial reign of Christ. The prophecy is a part inseparable from the text of the New Testament, and of the Old as well. If in the Apocalypse is recorded God's purpose to have for a thousand years his Christ reign, Daniel had, in ages long preceding, witnessed of a time when the kingdom and the dominion and



the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven should be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God. As in the very times and under the very eyes of inspired apostles there were, however, men wresting God's Scriptures unto their own destruction, we need not evidently wonder that like perversions, and with equally fatal results, should occur in later and less favored times. Men who sought change merely for its own sake—the idle, the insubordinate, and the fanatical—became known as Anabaptists, when, in truth, the Waldensians and the Hollanders, their allies in faith and religious sympathy, were generally against war, and against the use of the oath, and against the church's sharing in civil government even. They so shunned the world in its contaminations as to desire escape from participation in the offices and emoluments of political governments.

In the city of Münster, a rich town of Westphalia, the principles of the Reformation had found acceptance. Rothman, a pastor there, had become a Lutheran first; his people had risen under his preachings against the use of images, and violently removed and destroyed them. The feelings of the Peasant War had not passed away. He and his associates rejected Infant Baptism, but they cast off government as well from without, excepting that of the emperor. They had prophetic gifts of their own. The word of God was laid aside for these self-prompted oracles assuming to speak in God's name. The polygamy of the Old Testament and a modified community of goods also were introduced. Scenes of outrage and carnage ensued, that may well be veiled in abhorrence. Within, were



blood and riot and spiritual frenzy. Without, the secular and ecclesiastical authorities had combined to besiege the city and to crush the revolt. They did so, sternly and effectually. The misguided tailor of Leyden, who acted as king, and his two chief associates, were subjected to torture in having their flesh torn by red-hot pincers; and their skeletons, enclosed in iron cages, were raised on high and fastened to a church-steeple, there to remain down to our own times a ghastly memorial of the power of religious madness and of the fearful hold that Satan, if permitted, may attain under the guise of holy names and gracious reforms. Terrible as baleful is the power that godliness, when, in the language of Scripture, it is made gain, and gain, when it is supposed to be godliness, can exercise over the order, peace, and honor of general society, of the household, and of the individual. The history has been often repeated: the last narrator of it, the Roman Catholic scholar, Cornelius. Over the after-faith of the city it could not but be a fatal blight. A rigid Catholicism has been since the unbroken rule and the undisputed creed in Münster; or, as Luther phrased it when he heard of the suppression of the revolt and the death of the insurgents, in one of his sharp, broad sayings, cumbrous and somewhat coarse, "The devil is turned out, but the devil's grandmother has come back in his place." A higher than Pontiff or than Reformer had long since left the pregnant warning, that change, which is not thorough and hearty and heavenly, is often one that invites and ultimately secures a more rooted possession of error and a longer and more blighting dynasty of evil. The house, swept

and garnished, is inhabited the second time, but now by seven evil spirits worse than the first who had been temporarily barred out.

Do we wish to blink the fact that the name of the Anabaptist became, in connection with the errors and horrors of the Münster rebellion, a name of terror to rulers and of detestation to the churches? By no means. Let it stand, but let it be duly interpreted. Menno was not in it, nor was Tauber, nor was Hubmeier, nor was Münzer. So far was it from their views, as was the school of Marat from the school of La Fayette, as was the school of Robespierre from that of Brissot; though coetaneous, there was no internal, vital cohesion between.

So, in the days of the Stuart Restoration in England, there was an outbreak under Venner, a Millenarian fanatic, but a Pædobaptist, and rather bigoted in his pædobaptism. Bunyan's jailers threatened to hold him, the Baptist in Bedford jail, liable for the bloody and seditious scenes at London, in which Bunyan the Baptist had neither part nor sympathy, against alike all his principles, against every scratch made by his pen, and every prayer made in the ministrations of his pulpit.

When Domitian, the imperial ruler, was killing flies, one of his favorite amusements, at the imperial capital, suppose that there had been brought to the tyrant some lines of the Apocalyptic vision received by his prisoner, the aged John, in the isle of banishment, Patmos. Would the despot have been by any principle of reason or equity entitled to charge upon the old apostle the scenes of lawlessness that the apostle had been deploring

and condemning as occurring in a community nominally and professedly a Christian church at Thyatira? In his Master's name John denounced the wrath of Heaven as against the children of Jezebel, there retaining their practices and principles. Was his gospel justly a sharer in the dishonors that it thus repudiated? So in later times, when the great Jansenist body of France—so illustrious for talent and piety and for sufferings in the cause of truth—had, in their later days, some who became known as the Convulsionnaires, dazzled by the study of unfulfilled prophecy, seeing visions and working miracles, and often passing into scenes of unhappy disorder, were the illustrious men and women of the earlier days, or those of the later days, like Sylvester de Sacy the Orientalist, and Royer Collard the publicist and statesman, the orator and philosopher—Jansenists of our own day—were these men, we ask, responsible for the errors of co-religionists which they neither countenanced nor shared?

So, of the French Protestant body, how noble is the great record of the French Huguenots. How much did they suffer at home; and how blessed was the influence which they bore abroad to Prussia and Holland, to England and to Scotland, to Ireland and to our own North America. Not long since a French man of science recorded his sense of the Divine Nemesis, that among the soldiers who pressed the siege of Paris around the writer's place of study, so many were under the banners of Germany serving against France as the children of Huguenot exiles, that Louis XIV. had hounded and peeled, returning, in God's mysterious arrangements, to

plague the land where their forefathers had been so cruelly treated. Yet all the history of French Protestantism is not thus illustrious. Among some who carried on the war in Southern France was no little fanaticism. The Camisard was, though heroic, at times most frenzied. And their brethren in England became, some of them, what were called "the French prophets," who, with Lacy and other Englishmen as their dupes or helpers, yielded to wild excesses and provoked a just indignation and repressal. But this was not the fault of the great body. Yet the handful, thus offending, were not soon extinct, or the flame of their madness without its remote kindlings and ravages. Out of these French prophets, on English soil, came Ann Lee, the Mother, as they call her, the feminine incarnation of the Godhead, as they hold, and the first founder of the Shakers amongst ourselves. With all their thrift and their worldly prosperity, is the record of religious delusion thus begun one to be fastened on the great Huguenot body whom Sully and Mornay and Coligny led, whom Henry IV. deserted, and whom Louis XIV. so cruelly deceived, extruded, and dragooned?

And is American Christianity, liable justly, before the nations of the earth, for the great Mormon movement, with its forged Scriptures, its polygamy, its murderous tribe of Dan, and its terrible atrocities and profanations? The nation deplores what it cannot utterly eliminate. Far as it may, it is bound to discourage, to circumscribe, and in all evangelical earnestness to resist and expose and uproot the evil.

Yet, in the sweeping generalizations to which some so

readily and implicitly resort, some might make Mormonism a feature of American society, when the mass of its converts are of European growth and migration, the fruit of the neglect of established churches as shown toward the population of their own territory. So some might hold the memory of John Calvin blotted with the false faith and wild excesses of Ann Lee; might brand the beloved disciple and last survivor of the apostles as guilty of collusion with the iniquity of the Thyatiran church.

Individualism is the glory of our nation, and it is one of the chief distinctions of our religious denomination; and Hasé, the church historian, in his monograph on the men of Münster, calls our country the land of religious individualism, and trusts that our denomination may here forego their study of prophecy. Far as the disposition reigns to constitute the student's own fancy the great standard of truth, the employment may be perilous. But to neglect, against Christ's own warnings, the signs of the future, is to become blind to the true duties of the present. It is the confession of great theologians, in Denmark and in Britain and in Germany, that their own churches have been too indifferent to the significance of the protests which God's Spirit had drawn, as in advance, against errors yet to rise, and its portraiture of changes and deliverances which Providence had in reserve. The elder Confession of the English Established Church denounced Millenarianism, a contemplation of, and turning toward, the future prospects of Christ's church. But Mede in the Stuarts' times and Elliott in our own, and even Hurd,

the friend of Warburton, in his more sluggish days of the English Establishment, regarded this as an error, and lavished thought and toil on these pages of God's Old and New Testament. So in Denmark, Martensen, a theologian of no common eminence, considers it an error of Luther and his church that they took ground against Millenarianism. Bengel, one of the highest names of the German Christians in the study of God's word, was, if not a successful, yet a profound, collator of and searcher into those prophetic Scriptures which our early Baptist Fathers are charged with overvaluing.

Nor can there be any doubt, we judge, among thoughtful believers, that the times of the generations that are to follow our own will require, not less than our own, that Christians should give some share of their studies to the memorials which the Ruler of the ages has set up along the pathway of history, as notes that the God of prophecy has been there far in advance of his people. The world cannot rend the continuity of the centuries. We inherit the examples of our predecessors, and we are to share in the responsibility of our remotest successors. He who is in the Apocalypse presented as the God of the final judgment, is, in a certain subordinate sense, judging even now the families and the neighborhoods and the nationalities of this nineteenth century. The final and full judgment is future, but what lawyers call the "interlocutory judgments" are around us and over us. The title of the Messiah, Judge of the quick and the dead, is sometimes misread by our forgetting the force of the older English word. "Quick," in the mouths of our forefathers and of the



makers of our English version, meant "the living," those selling, planning, fretting, and trifling, studying, suffering, pining, and dying around us. And the Christ, the Omnipresent Emmanuel, would have every pursuit and engagement of this daily living throng, these quick ones, now drawing quick breath, but whose names are soon to fit into the obituary roll and the cemetery register—he would have the "quick" of earth's present tenantry understand, that by every sentence of Scripture and by every incident of providence they are bound to remember him, the Wakeful Judge, and him, the Swift Witness, Infallible, Inevitable, and Irrefutable.

Faithful to the Scripture, and faithful to the Spirit, and mindful of the Sacrifice, and vigilant for the grace ever near, and the work ever widening, the people of the living God have a power that needs yet to be developed, for it draws on the illimitable resources of Omnipotence. If he be ever with his church when that church is efficient and watchful, devout, lowly, and diligent, they need never despond. The Elder Brother binds us to his blessed tasks, not only by his own cross, but by each instance of the fidelity of our innumerable martyrs.

At the risk of wearying you, we take from the pages of Hasé, not of our communion, and regarded as of the Rationalist school of thinkers. It is but a leaf from the story of simple loyalty. In 1527, some Anabaptists (as they were called) were burned in the house where they had met, and with the edifice. A young maiden, about sixteen years old and of great beauty, the persecutors would have spared, would she but recant her faith. Find-

ing her inflexible, the executioner took her by the arm, led her to the horse-trough, and bowed her beneath the water until she drowned, and then the corpse was burned. In a town of Switzerland, a foreigner, an Anabaptist, was led to the rack and laid on it, with the promise, that if he would but tell his dwelling-place and his fellow-believers' names, he should have life and freedom. His reply was calm: "I am earth-born; the earth is my country, and it will be my grave. My body is in your power. Tear it and burn it as you like; it troubles me not. The Lord has closed my lips to prevent my saying a word that should harm my brethren, for their time is not yet come. My soul has no distress; it overflows with joy from the inward consolations with which God is filling it." As the executioner urged him to name his fellow-disciples, and so relieve himself of the torture, the stout confessor with antique simplicity spat into his face, with the words, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou savorest not the things that be of God." Finally released with stern menaces, his parting utterance to the enemies was, "Ye have seen a confessor of the new church to your own condemnation."

The Lord who won such resolute witnesses is indeed Judge of the living. A faith in him, intense, vivid, earnest, and persistent, becomes a new power in the earth, with which the literatures of the earth may puzzle themselves, but it mocks their most heartless and malign mockeries, and it defies their highest power and wrath.

"The Anabaptists" is the name still given to the communities in Switzerland and Germany which are universally acknowledged to be of great simplicity, industry, and

blameless morality. A French writer has depicted, in warmest admiration, one such community, which he, a child of Paris, visited, to be filled, in surveying it, with astonishment, delight, and reverence. The Anabaptists of the Vosges are like the Dunkers of our own country, and like the Mennonites of Southern Russia, long sheltered there, but quitting their homes because the government of Russia required of them military service, to which, like the Friends, they are on principle opposed. You have heard, but a few months since, of their transit from our own port, New York, to settlements in one of our Western States. In the valley of the Shenandoah, Sheridan's raid encountered religionists of this class, but long settled there. Miss Cheeseborough, one of our writers of fiction, has devoted a volume to the traits and virtues of a similar body, long ago planted in the interior of Pennsylvania.

Before the birth even of the frenzied rioters and revolt-ers of Münster, views prevailed in a portion of the Waldensians, those of them rejecting infant baptism, and among some of the Moravian brethren, utterly opposed to war and to the use of oaths and to civil office-holding. It was a mistaken view, as we think, of the Christian's due estrangement from the world. But because it did exist, and sway large bodies of hunted and imperilled disciples of Christ, it seems alike cruel and ludicrous to commit the anachronism, of making the fanatics of Westphalia, who were ferociously belligerent, the spiritual ancestry of a body far older, and peaceful and blameless and pure, who would not lift up sword or even take an oath.

To show the full absurdity of accepting such lawless fanatics—"the scum of the Reformation," as they have been called, one of the side eddies in that great movement of modern history—as if they constituted the fountain-head of our own body, let us suppose that the earlier years of our own Revolution had been as scantily furnished with writers and presses, as was the Europe of the earlier half of the sixteenth century. But few wrote, let us suppose, except enemies of the patriot cause; and let us imagine that the records of the Revolutionists were generally confiscated and burned, leaving a comparative dearth of annalists and registers. Inquiry is made, under these disadvantageous conditions, from what body of agitators sprang the movement that finally ushered in a Washington and a Hancock, the Adamases, and Jay and Hamilton and Jefferson and Lee, and other worthies. Then let us suppose there should a writer present himself whose testimony is that from his best researches the Cowboys of West Chester, in your own State, were the progenitors of American freedom. They were, it is true, he would courteously state, a quite disreputable body; meeting and working by night; sparing no man's cattle, and murdering where plunder could not otherwise be secured; and dashing down, now on loyalists and now on patriots, as might be most convenient; lawless as the raiders of the old Scottish border, with very lax notions of the rights of property, and a terror to the orderly in either camp of the combatants. But they had, this searcher into antique and broken records would remark, gradually refined and reformed; become more amenable to reason; and, in fact,

were really and indubitably the great representatives of the cause which, beginning at Bunker Hill, closed its battles at Yorktown, and made you a nation free and one. Against this theory would at once be alleged a chronological difficulty—that they did not begin their plunder and their marauding until after the Revolutionary conflict had well commenced, and that, in demeanor and principle and character and influence, they were not quite akin to the Continental Congress, or to the spirits that drafted the Declaration of Independence. The champions of such origin would reply, that very distinguished representatives of the statesmanship and patriotism of the Revolution lived in that same West Chester County; that neighborhood implied identity of pursuit, character, and party; and that it was a matter of preposterous national pride to shrink from recognizing such as the real origin for the institutions of these United States of America.

Yet the dissonance and the chronological entanglement in such installation of the cattle-stealers and red-handed prowlers of the borders as the true fathers and founders of American freedom would only be a parallel to the endeavor to impose upon the Baptist Christians of the world such a group as John of Leyden and Knipperdoling of Münster as the real originators of our principles and practice.

Some of you saw with your own eyes, in the days of the draft-riots, the mob that plundered and burned orphan asylums, hung negroes to the lamp-post, and carried for a time misrule and dismay throughout your peopled city in the very crisis of the nation's agonizing strife for existence.

Had a foreigner, as you gazed on the grim, fierce visages of that ominous crowd, assured you that they were, these same men, guardians of the nation's liberty, honor, and life; that in them you were to see the flower of her chivalry, and the highest exhibition of her energy, you might be somewhat astonished, but not so easily convinced. If it were to be told you in confidence, what history in some later day will probably tell aloud, who were the guiding instigators of that riot; and were you to be assured, that it was by their skill, by the far-sighted but unnamed and retiring prompters of the mob, that Wall street, the avenue of your banks and custom-house and sub-treasury and mint, was guarded; that it was owing to their patriotic caution and vigilance, that the long street was not left with every building dismantled and her treasury-vaults plundered of the last dollar, like some eel, flayed, disembowelled, and headless, dragging its sinuous length from Broadway to the river, one line of irremediable ruin, the corpse of the embodied national credit; if you heard whilst gazing on such patriots, that their unseen and bashful leaders by their unwashed hands defended and protected the riches of the metropolis and the unity of the Republic,—you would find the comment rather hard of belief, however quiet you might prudently make your dissent.

Would it be more so than when reading the histories of what good men have done and what they have been in the past, and of what bad men beside them have attempted, and it may be have accomplished, of evil and misrule, to believe, that in the church of God evil



has begotten good, and iniquity has ripened and elevated itself into true piety? A wiser Judge, reading alike the living and the dead, has decided that thistles do not bear figs, and that men can scarce plant thorns and expect grapes as the fruitage.

The great lesson of all, in the evil and in the good, is, that it behooves us to know of what spirit we ourselves are, what Spirit we invoke, and upon what prompting and helping we lean, in the time of our utter exhaustion. The Spirit of God, invoked and obeyed by a loyal church, is the fountain of holy living and the pledge of fraternal unity. Accept in his stead your own feeble reason, the public opinion of the masses, the voice of the many, or the cry of the sharp-sighted few, and your feet must stumble. But a God giving his Spirit liberally and without upbraiding, evermore the banner of his own people, their Jehovah-nissi, carries unity, liberty, and triumph. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord of Hosts. And all the galleries of earth's varied history, and all the deep mines of man's profoundest and most patient research, will ultimately give back the loyal echo of that great proclamation, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." It is the brightness of Pentecost; it is the dawn of millennial splendors; it is the very atmosphere of that city and land where God's people walk, to go out no more for ever, their earthly errors all thoroughly unlearned, and their mortal discords all finally hushed, in the One Presence.



VII.

RATIONALISM

IN ITS

RELATIONS TO OUR CHURCHES.



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THOSE who may have looked into the reprint, issued at London some two years since, that would reproduce in brown paper and rude type the first edition of Bunyan's immortal *Pilgrim*, will have observed the change that the great dreamer made in passing to his second edition from the first form of the work, as to certain talks held by Christian at the beginning of his way with a Mr. Worldly Wiseman. This gentleman undertakes to relieve the burdened pilgrim. He and Mr. Legality and "the pretty young man, his son, Mr. Civility," are presented as misguiding the forlorn traveller at his very outset, when, under the instructions of Evangelist, he is, beneath the shadows of grim Sinai, aiming for the Wicket Gate and for the Cross beyond it.

The allusions are, on the part of the great allegorist, to a school of Christian teachers, then represented by many illustrious names, as thinkers, scholars, and preachers, in the Established Church, and who were called the Latitudinarian divines. Among them was the Mr. Fowler, afterward a bishop, with whom Bunyan had a contro-

versy, a man of worth and culture, but who assumed toward the tinker the tone of scornful superiority which posterity has judged by no means warranted, and that in justice might well have been reversed. As a man of genius not only, but in acquaintance with his Bible, and as a preacher of the gospel grappling with men's hearts and swaying men to a better life, the bespattered and imprisoned dissenter was immeasurably above the Latitudinarian, Edward Fowler, on whose brow came the mitre of Gloucester. Burnet, Barrow, Cumberland, Cudworth, Whichcote, John Smith, and Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury—held, in some respects, to be among the churchmen of that day the greatest of their preachers—all belonged to a new group of teachers, who, alienated alike from the Puritanism of the earlier Established Church and from the Ritualism of Archbishop Laud, turned men's minds from doctrine and discipline to conduct, insisted on the morals of the gospel, relied much on the philosophy of the old Greek and Roman world, and gave, beyond doubt, to the illustrious dreamer the originals of his *Worldly Wiseman*, *Legality*, and *Civility*, the "pretty young man," domiciled "in the village of Morality." Their theology, borrowed, in part at least, from the Remonstrant, or Arminian, party in the Church of Holland, led in a later generation to an approach to Socinianism, and helped to prepare that descent of so many of the aristocracy of Britain into the Deism or Naturalism which Butler in his *Analogy* deplores as having in his day become so lamentably prevalent. Their name, the Latitudinarians, grew from the breadth, the latitude, of



interpretation which they gave to the old formularies of doctrine, and the wider comprehension they would grant to certain forms of religious error within church bounds. Its tendency, though not its creed, was essentially what in later days has received the appellation of Rationalism. This term, in our own times, is by some used in a good sense; by others unfavorably, in the intent of reproaching the first principles and ultimate tendencies of the system. The Latitudinarians of the days of the Stuarts would, in most important elements, be found one in temper and aim with the Rationalists of later Germany, France, and America.

Now, our own denomination in Britain and on the Continent has been not infrequently, but most unwarrantably, as we judge, charged with sliding naturally into the more advanced forms of Rationalism. One of the old scholars of the Netherlands, strong in his acquaintance with Latin and Greek, but wavering rather discredibly in his religious affiliations as interest or ease might dictate, and ultimately joining himself, with idolatrous honors to the Virgin Mary, to the Romish communion—Justus Lipsius—has said, “An Anabaptist is but an ignorant Socinian; a Socinian is but a learned Anabaptist.” Looking backward to mediæval times and to apostolical, and then turning the glance forward from the Reformation down to our own age, the adage lacks confirmation. It may be curt and keen, but it is not true. Turn to the statement of the two eminent Hollander scholars, Ypeij and Dermout, both attached to the National or Reformed Church of that country, and writing its history. They have occa-

sion, in the course of their extended work, to allude to the remote antiquity of our own so-called Anabaptist confessors; and thus they describe our body, using for it four several names, as attached to it at various periods of history:\*

“We have already seen that the Baptists—those who in former times were named Anabaptists, and in later days Mennonites—were originally Waldensians, the men who, in the history of the church, in times so far back, have obtained a well-deserved renown. In consequence, the Baptists may be regarded as being from of old the only religious denomination that have continued from the times of the apostles, as a Christian society who have kept the evangelical faith pure through all the ages hitherto. The constitution, never perverted internally or externally, of the society of the Baptists, serves them as a proof of that truth, contested by the Romish Church, that the reformation of religion, such as was brought about in the sixteenth century, was necessary, was indispensable, and serves, too, as the refutation, at the same time, of the Roman Catholic delusive fancy, that their own is the oldest church society.”

Ypeij held an ecclesiastical professorship and was a voluminous author on historical themes, and his various works are yet largely cited. Dermout, his associate in the history, was a Reformed Church preacher at The Hague. Our missionary, William Ward, who, in his visit to Europe and America in the later years of his life, made a brief stay in Holland, describes Dermout as chaplain to the

\* *Gerchied. d. Nederl. Hervormde Kerk*, t. i., 1819, p. 148.

court, The Hague being the city of the royal residence.\* Sepp, one of our Hollander Baptist brethren, a scholar of reputation, in his essay—which in 1860 obtained the prize of the Teyler Society—on the theologians of Holland from the close of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, rates Dermout as among the most powerful of the nation's preachers in his own age.† Men, then, such as Ypeij and Dermout, from their social and ecclesiastical position little liable to undue and over-favorable views of our annals and of our religious influence, would seem, by no means, to sustain the judgment of Lipsius as

\* C. M. VAN DER KEMP, in his work animadverting upon Ypeij and Dermout for what he supposes undue honors accorded to Erasmus, a bias against Calvinists, and a leaning too marked in favor of the early leaders of the Arminians, *De Eere der Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk Gehandhasfd tegen Ypeij en Dermout* (Rotterdam, 1830, 3 vols.), at vol. i., p. 2, describes one of our authors, Ypeij, as "professor of theology in connection with the Reformed Church in a distinguished university of our land," and the other, Dermout, as "by his position the regular teacher in one of our most distinguished churches, court chaplain to His Majesty, and secretary and permanent member of the Supreme Reformed Church Synod."

† *Pragmatische Geschiedenis der Theologie Hier te Lande, Sedert Het Laatste der Vorige Eeuw tot op Onzen Tijd*, Door CHRISTIAN SEPP, Predikant bij de Doopsgezende Gemeente te Leider. Uitgegeven door TEYLER'S Godgeleerd Genootschap, Haarlem, 1860. The subject was presented for competition by the society in 1858. Sepp's estimate of Dermout as a preacher appears at pp. 430, 431, where he states that Borger, one of Holland's most brilliant scholars, early lost, was accustomed to rate Dermout, as being above even Van der Palm, who, as scholar, writer, and preacher, has won a reputation, not only pervading Holland, but reaching Britain and our own country also.

to the imputed spiritual kinsmanship between Baptist and Unitarian. Yet when our denominational views bid men go, individually, to the word of God, and to implore personally the Spirit of God, and to accept distinctly, and apart from household ancestry or sacerdotaly, the grace and rule of Christ, the development thus given to the individual soul might seem to lead, rapidly and easily, to the undue and distorted aggrandizement of authority, in the individual's own recourse to his solitary, unaided judgment; and there have been, in single persons and in communities, divergencies toward this form of error. Paul held that the old classic world "by wisdom knew not God." The Scriptures, ages ago, assured us, that to lean to our own understanding was not prudent, nor wise, nor safe; and warned us, that the man trusting in his own heart is a fool. Self-sufficiency, in the concerns that bind man's spirit to his Maker in religion, creed, and worship, bars out, in a certain deplorable sense, the efficiency of divine grace, and the all-sufficiency of the God who would, willingly, be "All-in-all" to his people, and cannot be this, when they affect to be all-in-all to themselves.

Now, as against the men who employ Rationalism in a favorable and eulogistic sense only, and who suppose themselves to find all the reforms of society and each ascending stage of social progress and national betterment, in the triumph of Rationalism, it needs to be remembered that these modern citers of the appellation give to the term Rationalist a sense entirely different from that in which the theologians who first coined and who had long

used the word understood the phrase themselves and wished it to be understood by their readers. Its first users would denote by it the tendency of man to set his own ratiocinations, as prior and overbearing in their authority, in rivalry with the utterances of God ; the disposition which leads us, so often and so easily, to trust what yet careful observers so mistrust in their own case—first impressions ; to rate the precipitate prejudgment of the disciple's mind above the deliberate and final judgments of the Master's mind. The opinion, in a question of morals or creed, of the great Englishman, called yet by the adhesive title of the "judicious" Hooker, would perhaps, from the bashful humility of the good pastor, come later than the prompt utterances, on the same question, of his parish sexton. The pertter and earlier speaker would be likely to err in forgetting the Scripture rule enunciated by a speaker who is to be the world's Final Judge: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." Yet it might be worth while to wait, after the ready deliverance of the bell-ringer, for the more tardy deliverance of the man wont to occupy the pulpit, though the last were of hesitating enunciation. Now, many a question of opinion has been decided wrongly by precipitate utterances of those who never undertook to search below the plausible in quest of the real. On such superficial arbitraments, ready but not as real as they were rapid, have been, in more than one age of religious history, based some of what Rationalism regarded for the time as its great rules for settling what the Bible is, what man is, and what God is ; where sin adheres, and whence salva-

tion comes. Writers, like Saisset in France, and Hasé in Germany, have united in the complaint, that what in theology its friends claim as Rationalism has never laid down its definitions, precise and clear, of what in their judgment is the full prerogative and the wise scope of human reason in the matters of religious faith. Considering how gravely and widely the assailants of orthodoxy have dissented among themselves, as to the last results of their own rational scrutiny and judgment, it seems just occasion of regret, that the processes upon which those results were to be ascertained have not been calmly and distinctly indicated from the very commencement of the inquiry. Could man make his own Bible, and in the energy of his mental endowments cast his own god, projecting, at one fling of the intellect, his symmetric deity, just as the deft hand of Aaron, by the aid of molten metal, brought out of the mould the golden calf that the tribes were summoned to worship as the planner of their exodus? He who makes out of his own reason his Scripture and his God must go on to make, as best he may, his own heaven. A revelation being in the world; the claim being here before our own eyes, that our Maker has told us of his own nature and will, and of our duties and destinies, it is but reasonable and equitable that we give him patient, reverent hearing before we proceed to judge.

Let us, then, ask hastily :

I. What are the rights of reason in matters of religious faith ?

II. What are the wrongs which those opposed to Ra-



tionalism complain of this system as having inflicted by a perverse use of the name of the reasonable?

III. Then let us inquire how far the Baptists have, personally or in large bodies, aided the growth of Rationalism; and

IV. How far they have, as a denomination, been its eager and not inefficient antagonists.

I. It is unquestionably the province of reason to examine intelligently and reverently the document professing to come from a Divine Author, and to reveal an invisible world with its eternal retributions. The volume of Scripture is made up of several distinct treatises, the works of men far remote in age, and very varied in the character of the surroundings that would naturally influence them. The histories it contains are to be tested with the aid and the collation of other contemporaneous narrations, where such may be found.

The miracles on the outer material world and on the inner world of man's soul and character are not to be dismissed as at once incredible. Such was in Germany a very recent and general assumption, but it is certainly not reasonable; and John Stuart Mill, not himself a believer, yet allows that if there be admitted the existence of a personal God, there is nothing to be regarded as extravagant in the claim, that he has wrought wonders to authenticate his message. Some fulfilments of prophecy are, again, of the nature of miracles of a high order, and of a more diffusive evidence than wonders wrought in sea or sky or earth. Ascertain the early date of the prediction—often when uttered of unlikely fulfilment—

and then see, centuries after that date, by parties and influences not interested in the sustaining of the record, the fulfilment of the ancient oracle, and here is a miracle of a very high order, as impartial reason must allow. The dispersion of the Jews for so many centuries, without their national absorption, is among such portentous authentications that the book making the pledge of their being scattered among the nations, yet not intermingled with the nations, came from a divine foresight. Then, again, reason has a right to ponder, and is bound in equity to weigh dispassionately, the moral contents of the Scriptures, the holiness of the God there portrayed, the character of the Saviour—Son of the Father, and Incarnation and Presentation of True Godhead—in his discourses, acts, and sufferings, in his influence as long expected in type and prophecy, his subsequent influence on church and world, in ordinances and conversions, and effusions of the Spirit. These are moral traits of the book, putting it apart from all the sacred books of other religions.

The mode in which it shows the reader's own heart, and as a mirror flashes back the moral judgment of his own unbribed conscience, is another personal appeal to the intellect no less than the heart. The book, as Coleridge says, "meets me;" it finds the wanderer, as the straying sheep was clutched by the Good Shepherd; it startles the offender, as Ahab was shocked when he turned to Elijah with the cry, "Hast thou found me, O my enemy?" When Rochester, after a life of profligacy in the court of one of the worst of English kings—a profli-

gate before, and hardened by skepticism—was on his deathbed, he was brought to read the volume, and exclaimed to his Christian friend, "The only argument against the book is a man's own bad life;" and the frank confession was followed by a deep penitence. In this case we have the attestation of Reason; when the glare of the torches of Vanity and Fashion has died out, and the masks of interest and passion have dropped off from Error and Vice, the pages, with the light of conscience and eternity beaming upon them, flash back the rays of their own divine origin.

The book, again, appeals to the reader to obey what he sees to be true if he would be led onward to fresh truth. "If any man will do his [my Father's] will, he shall know of the doctrine," said Christ. A loyal towardness is the requisite temper for a happy issue of the examination. A man must, in ordinary fairness and reason, be willing to yield this in the course of his scrutiny. He must be willing to relinquish the idols there detected, and to follow the clues there manifested.

Now, in all these modes, as well as in exercising a judicious criticism on the allusions and imagery of the volume, reason has its legitimate sway and prerogatives. The Bible is a letter from an absent Parent. The genuineness of an epistle received by a son in the city from a beloved mother, it may be in the far rural home, is evidenced in part by the postage-stamp that it bears, and by the livery and known occupation of the postman who delivers it into the eager hands of the recipient; and for such evidence from the postman, even if the letter itself

comes in the handwriting of some neighbor who corresponds in behalf of the mother, now perchance on her sick-bed, and that hand be to the son an unknown one, the youth who takes the letter and breaks the seal may be grateful. Reason is the postman delivering us God's message from the far skies. But supposing that, after the letter-carrier has delivered the epistle to its owner's keeping, he should stop and suggest his criticisms on the good mother's mode of uttering her thoughts, and should go on to say, that if the letter was in the venerable woman's own hand, the spelling of "*honour*" with a "*u*" was antiquated, and not sustainable according to the authority of Webster, and that the good lady took more of her paper for maternal admonitions than in his judgment was desirable, would not the recipient of such critical emendations be rather annoyed? Would it not be quite natural if he should hint gently, that, gratified as the reader of the letter might be with the postman's services in authenticating the country postmark and the hour of the city receipt, it was scarce desirable that his valuable time should be wasted in further remarks on what lay more between the mother and her Benjamin? So, if God has promised his Spirit to the asker, the perennial intercourse of the Heavenly and Divine Parent with the dependent and filial soul is a matter which Reason should leave to the handling of the God who has undertaken it. The letter-carrier should attend merely to his proper duty, and should not affect to encroach, and to improve upon the teachings of the Parent.

There will be, as the old Christians were fond of re-

marking, much that may be above reason, that yet is not against reason; great facts and truths, that the unaided intellect could not have discovered for itself. Yet some of these truths, thus requiring superior wisdom for their manifestation, are, when disclosed, sustained by their own intrinsic beauty and majesty. What, again, we do not fully comprehend, we may really and reasonably apprehend. The man who has never trode the shore of China, and never expects to, may yet have full confidence that there is such a land, from various reports and testimony. If his brother sail thither and be a missionary there, both brothers hold the truth; but the one never visiting apprehends the nature of the country, whilst the other residing there comprehends it. There are, again, as even reason may perceive, truths that, partially discerned, cannot in this existence be fully mastered. Here we "know in part." Mysteries belong not to religion only, but to science as well; not merely to the things of the soul, but to the very life of the body. No man of us has seen his own heart or his own brain. There are portions of the human frame, carried by individual men for centuries, of which medical science can yet scarce tell the properties and purposes. We are a wonder, a mystery, to ourselves. Life is a mystery. The light by which we see is a mystery. Thought itself is a mystery. To object to the existence of mysteries in God's book and in his nature and in his providence; to make them as a cause of questioning his volume or his own character and rights, is not to act a reasonable part. It is to make our littleness an argument against the great-

ness of the God that formed and feeds and would fain bless us.

II. Now, as against the system that its admirers have installed, under the name of Rationalism, to judge and supersede the Bible, the churches of Christ have cause to object that its criticisms have no present harmony, and result in no practical unison. If, indeed, the new and adverse power be the outbreak of Reason as against Faith, it should by this date have settled upon some tribunal in which the overruling power that so abridges and retrenches, and even rejects, Revelation is made to centre. and fix its permanent seat. Is this the judgment of the thinker, each man for himself, apart from his fellows? or is it the common sense of the great masses, apart from the prejudices of schools and the dogmas of churches? or is it the more cultured and more richly-stored mind of some philosopher, living apart and thinking profoundly and seeing clearly, when others are but purblind, or discern with disturbed vision? The faith of the Nazarene has had some of the loftiest intellects of the race in the ranks of its loyal, its lowly adherents. There is yet no response as to the great Delphi, whence the oracles of this overruling Reason are to be proclaimed. The masses are not agreed; the schools jangle; the philosophers themselves change, collide, and mutually blaspheme.

But many seem to have forgotten the obvious facts, and feel that the popular flings against right and truth are to be accepted as decisive against the existence of such right and revelation, and as to the presence of such truth in the old prophet and apostle. Let us, then, ask if the ob-



jectors are greater, intellectually and morally, than the receivers. Take up the *Thoughts of Pascal*, as commented upon by Voltaire and Condorcet. Brilliant and clear as are these critics, who are sometimes scoffers rather than critics, we judge that his must be a warped and blinded mind who, in reading the text and the margin, does not feel and does not own that the Christian philosopher, in force of thought, in tone of feeling, and in high purpose, is immeasurably the superior of the two skeptics who sit upon the skirts of that Christian's robe. The tone of Voltaire at least, reminds one of what might be the grimaces of a showman's ape who had lighted upon the diary and medicine-chest of some Howard, dead in the forest, and who sputtered indignantly over the bitterness of the drugs which, in the hands of their beneficent owner, were meant to quell pain and to avert death, but which, to the exasperated finder, were an utter nullity and a cruel disappointment.

There is much of a disposition in every age to idolize the present, as outranking the past, and as containing all the hopes of the future. As travel becomes more rapid and free; and as translations, rendering the literary and religious treatises of one tongue into another tongue, spoken, it may be, on the other side of the planet, are bringing the long-severed into close and easy collation, it is very natural to form the thought that all the several religions are to be levelled to the same rank of the questionable and mutually irreconcilable, and that they must be, all and altogether, abandoned. Burke, in his day, spoke of Englishmen who had dropped the articles of creed

and decalogue in the sea which they traversed as, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, they sought a new home in heathen India. We do not know that the process was a reasonable one, or the results happy and enviable.

So the criticism and literature of the age are prone to affect the popular, and secure this end often by flattering the very weaknesses of the age. Sir Arthur Helps, in one of his books, speaks of a British nobleman whose wonder was that the weakest of his sons was the most generally liked. The sentiment was far earlier than the days when Helps notes it. Charles II., the shrewd but the reckless and merry king, blamed the men of the Established Church for not gathering back the Dissenters. One of his chaplains, a very weak man, but a busy one, had been appointed by his king to a rectory where he had, by going among his dissenting parishioners, brought them all to the church. The sovereign said it seemed to him unaccountable, but that "the man had put his nonsense to their nonsense," and it had succeeded. In reward for his English success, the king made him bishop of an Irish see, as Burnet tells it. But the popularity of some of the objectors to the Bible is accounted for on this very principle. It is weakness sympathizing with and flattering weakness. Yet to some the currency of such objections seems explicable only on the principle of their justice and unimpeachable rightfulness. The Rationalism of Germany, at an age of her religious history not very long gone, was just of this class. Men took up and gave back—took up from the mouth and gave back to the ears of the people their flimsiest and their boldest

objections. For a time the hurricane seemed irresistible. But it went by, and the immortality of its literary organs went down as rapidly as it rose. Look at the influence wielded by the great *Encyclopædia* of Diderot. Where is it now? Look at the power of Nicolai in German literature. Who now, of ordinary German readers, knows his time and position?

And yet, under the influence of such objections and leaders, popular, shallow, plausible, and headstrong, doctrine after doctrine was dropped from the creed, book after book was shoved out of the Canon. A Christ, without prophecies to herald him, or miracles to attend him, was dis-crowned and undeified. First he was sage, then fanatic, then schemer, then myth. Revealed religion became natural religion; and natural religion became a particolored deism, or a blank, a dark, atheism. As said one of their homely sages, Matthias Claudius, men in their wisdom undertook to require that the sun in the heavens should be set back, or urged forward, to bring the orb of day into due and loyal subordination to their own revered wooden clock, that ticked over the kitchen chimney. God was to mend himself to suit man; or, failing, he was insolently warned to take the consequences.

A favorite plea for it all was that only by such rational accommodations of the old and strict orthodoxy could the masses be propitiated and saved from utter irreligion. The sceptic would thus be saved to the church; and the church would thus be preserved by the tolerance, if not in the full confidence, of the nation. The result was in little accordance with the prediction. Instead of winning

the scoffers, they were incensed and scandalized at such temporizing with what claimed to be divine oracles. Lessing, a man of unquestioned genius, but himself unhappily not a Christian, very distinctly and almost fiercely wrote of the new Rationalists as bringing in a system infinitely less wise and harmonious and worthy of respect than the old orthodoxy. See, in our own days, the language of Morley \* in his life of Voltaire, himself in seeming sympathy with his subject, when he refers to a peculiarity of our own times: "The strange and sinister methods of assault upon religion, which we of a later day watch with wondering eyes, and which consist in wearing the shield and device of a faith, and industriously shouting the cry of a church, the more effectually to reduce the faith to a vague futility, and its outward ordering to a piece of ingeniously-reticulated pretence."

Such is the estimate that infidelity, not in this matter biased in favor of our gospel, puts upon the methods of popularizing the gospel in order to save it.

If it does not satisfy the doubters who are to be placated, it fails—which is still more strange—to satisfy the very authors of these vaunted amendments when they get older and nearer the edge of this brief mortal life. Semler, the father of modern German Rationalism, is not satisfied in his old age with the results of his own work. Paulus comes after him, a Rationalist of another school, and a great Orientalist. But his old age is one of discontent. Strauss, still another who had aided to discredit and ridicule the acknowledged evasions of miracles in

\* *Life of Voltaire*, N. Y., 1872, p. 8.

Paulus, has his Lives of Christ; writes and alters; and alters and rewrites; and goes off the stage believing in no revelation, and losing all hope of a personal immortality, yet expecting to be heeded in every whirl of his whiffing unbelief.

But God took, in his providence, other methods of answering. As Tholuck said, "the thunders of the battle-fields of Leipsic and Waterloo rekindled the sparks of religious life in the German nation."

III. Now, of this fearful course, that in a form so unreasonable and with results so disastrous has labored to amend the handiworks of God, have our churches had any large share? The younger Socinus settled in Poland. There was, in a certain portion of the churches there and in Hungary, a sort of intercourse for a time between Baptists and Unitarians. Dudith, a Roman Catholic bishop, who attended, as such, the celebrated Council of Trent, and delivered two discourses there, which are preserved in the published records of that council, became rather Unitarian, and some say a Baptist, in that portion of Europe. The fraternization was, however, limited in extent and temporary in duration. So, in Holland, when the Remonstrants or Arminians went down before the predominant power of the Calvinists, some of the Remonstrants projected a coalition with the Mennonites of that country, as a numerous and a popular body. Some of those Remonstrants passed over to Arianism, and there were some of our Mennonite churches which also imbibed the same influence. So, in England, the General Baptists, who had been, though Arminian in doctrine, yet evangel-

ical in the earlier times of influence, became also Arian. Wm. Whiston was identified with them. With them, too, sympathized, Gale, a learned writer of our own body, of that branch of it. And the James Foster whom Pope, no very facile or partial critic, has consigned to immortality in the lines,

“Let modest Foster, if he will, excel  
Ten Metropolitans in preaching well,”

was a General Baptist and an Arian. But under the influence of Rationalism, in this form of it, the General Baptists wilted into weakness, and wellnigh into extinction, as the Mennonites of Holland, under the like curse, have diminished rapidly in numbers, zeal, and influence.

The Particular—by which name was meant the Calvinistic—Baptists have grown. They had, in the days of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, men of piety and some men of scholarship among their pastors. Bunyan stands apart. He was of them. In later days, Gill—of whom Toplady the churchman, but a personal friend, said that in controversy he was never met by any his match—was, in Rabbinical learning we should judge, the equal of Lightfoot, generally held the greatest of Rabbinical scholars among English theologians.

When, in times near our own, God stirred up an illiterate but devout man, Dan Taylor, among the General Baptists, to protest and strive against this dangerous heresy, his New Connection began to thrive. John G. Pike, not long dead, and the author of works reprinted and valued here, was one of the preachers in this new body,



recalled from heresy, and thus and thenceforth pervaded with a new life.

When one of the missionaries of our evangelical brethren in India, originally a Baptist, became there Unitarian, he attempted a mission to be sustained by fellow-Unitarians in England and America, but it soon withered and perished.

IV. What have we done, let us lastly inquire, to resist, under God, this influence? Our churches have as a whole, neither in Switzerland, Britain, nor in this country, yielded to it, but stemmed, and often most vigorously, the onflowing tide of error. Andrew Fuller, one of our writers, destitute of classical training, but a man of singular acuteness and clearness of intellect, and with great force and directness of utterance, was not only effective against infidelity by his *Gospel its Own Witness*, but by his *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Compared*, he, a mere Shamgar, as it might seem, entering the battlefield with but an ox-goad against the mailed errorists of his island, produced an impression that some learned Unitarians sought, but very unsuccessfully, to counteract.

In Boston, at the time when all the churches founded by the Puritan Congregational Fathers had, with one exception, gone over to this error, our people stood firm, and their services to the cause of evangelical truth in that respect have been, by Pædobaptist brethren, more than once acknowledged.

One of the causes of the growth of Rationalism has been found by German Christians in the ashes of a dead orthodoxy. Now, our own churches seem in one respect

less liable to this evil than those having an infant membership. The last inherit a creed sometimes without an experience. Our polity, if faithfully administered by spiritual churches and pastors, demands inexorably, far as human judgment can scan it or secure it, that there shall be a personal experience along with the inherited creed. Our Mennonite brethren in Holland seem to some of us, observers from abroad, to have succumbed more readily to this influence of a traditional hereditary orthodoxy, not vitalized by personal conversion in their new membership, because, in some of them at least, the practice had prevailed of letting in the young at a certain age to membership, by a sort of confirmation, as in the Episcopal Church it would be called, without rigid exaction of the evidence of personal piety on the arrival of the young at such development of thought and mind as might make their adherence intelligent, whether or not it were cordial, a matter of the brain, if not of the heart.

The missions to which God has stirred up our churches have reacted visibly and vividly on their own home-life. That their form of polity is not the main cause of the failure in Holland and in the General Baptists of Britain, to maintain the old evangelical faith, may be inferred from the fact that the Presbyterians of England largely, and to some extent those of Scotland also, became involved in the same drift toward a denial of the old doctrines of the trinity, atonement, inspiration of the Bible, and justification by faith. The church of Matthew Henry --himself so devout, and the son of the holy Philip Hen-

ry—went over to Arianism. And in the great church of Scotland, the bulwark, as it might have been expected to prove, of sound doctrine, the reign of Moderatism carried over numbers of its most learned and its most intellectual pastors and writers to principles not very distinguishable from those of German Rationalism. In the Presbyterian Church of the North of Ireland, it also prevailed. God raised up Witherspoon, by his *Ecclesiastical Characteristics*, to witness against the Scottish defection. Bishop Warburton, who was far from full reception of the evangelical system, yet felicitated Witherspoon on the appearance of that work, and declared that there was a class in the English Established Church to whom the charges were equally applicable. In Ireland, God raised up Dr. Cooke to denounce the error and all coalition with it, and he led the healing severance. Our own Carson partook in the good work.

· Upon the fall of the first Napoleon, the Continent of Europe, long closed against British Christians, was once more opened to their evangelizing zeal. Among the first to enter it was Robert Haldane, a member of one of our own churches. His earlier religious history had been remarkable. He was born to wealth, and a near relative to the British admiral, Lord Duncan, who had won the battle of Camperdown. When the grace of God met and changed him, Haldane had sold a magnificent home and estate, intending with the proceeds to sustain himself and Greville Ewing, and other Pedobaptist friends, as missionaries in the possessions of the British East India Company. Notwithstanding his aristocratic alliances, the jealousy of that Company forbade his being allowed to plant that

Eastern mission. He then devoted the zeal and means, thus barred out from the far East, to home evangelization in Scotland. He and his brother, once in command of a ship sailing to India, now devoted to the same gospel, made it, under God, a most effective enterprise. But study of God's word made both these brothers Baptists.

When Robert, the elder and wealthier, visited Geneva, he found the old home of Calvin given over to a predominant and proscriptive Rationalism. The good Scotsman, not master of the French, could hold but cramped and imperfect conference with the young theological students of that Unitarian school, whom he had by effort gathered around him. But God gave to his testimony, as attended with the Spirit's energies, the awakening and conversion of Gaussen and of Merle d'Aubigné, the historian of the Reformation. How large the field of influence since traversed by the new laborers—not, indeed, denominationally with us, but won to the common gospel by a champion of our own denomination—we cannot pause to remark.

If, in an earlier generation, Robert Robinson of Cambridge, of our own ministers, under the influence of Priestly and of Lindsay, swerved from the old foundations, and deserted the faith his hymns, sermons, and controversial labors had once maintained, the mocking tone of the convert gave umbrage to Priestly himself; and neither the church over which he had long presided, nor the more brilliant successor who filled his vacated pulpit, Robert Hall, partook in the secession. Dyer, the learned but eccentric Greek scholar, who wrote Robinson's life,

has scarcely made the memory of the preacher and student one to awaken an infectious admiration, or one to win new recruits for the standard of the new gospel.

Chalmers in Scotland was, in the hands of the Divine Providence, an instrument to discourage Moderatism, as it was called, and to hearten and enlarge the evangelical party until it became a majority. But the action of the British government in patronage provoked and drove out that majority to create a separate church—the Free, as they called it—and one eminently vigorous it has proved itself, in missions, literature, and pastoral work. But the established Presbyterian Church left behind, on the withdrawal of the Free, seems threatened with a growth of the old Moderatism.

One of their own members, the late Norman Macleod, regretted the effect of Rationalism, as he found it in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Holland, in leaving many pastorates unfilled. And in the spirit of deference to the papal portion of the nation, the schoolbooks of Holland, as Macleod records, may no longer mention the sufferings of the nation in the strifes with Alva, Spain, and Rome, when their martyrs and our own Mennonite martyrs were burned, drowned, flayed, and buried by thousands. It is one of the strange, yet we think natural, results of a large infusion of Rationalistic feeling into a nominally Protestant country, that its churches and institutions tend rapidly to feed Rome with new converts.

Bring the conscience and faith of the churches from the *One*, the Spirit of God—Perfect and True, and the Guardian of truth—down to the *many*, be they Fathers, synods,

writers, or preachers, and the result is to unsettle the foundations and to divide the membership. What rests on the faith of the many, the many may alter, desert, and denounce. Principle then becomes but opinion, and opinion becomes a matter of traffic and mutual barter. One surrenders this, and another renounces that; and both have, for the God-given and the God-witnessed, received in exchanged the veneerings of man and the refinements of fashion. The opinions clash, and man's reason aspires to supplant what God seems, in this negligence of his word and Spirit—seems, we say—to have left unprovided for. The result is that the fancies of earth soon replace the oracles of heaven. As in the second of Bunyan's great allegories, the Holy War, the Lord Secretary of Mansoul, the Divine Spirit—to whom Christ bequeathed the care of his church and the continuous vitality of his ministry, his ordinances, and his membership—slighted, neglected, grieved, withdraws the *evidences* of his presence. It is, to the spirituality of the Christian church, what blood-poison is to the bodily frame of the individual man. The whole activity of religion is palsied; the currents of religious zeal and hope and love flow languidly, or stagnate utterly. The Paraclete will not be dispensed with by any arrangements of human wisdom, art, or eloquence. He is the Author of the written oracles and the Feeder of the living ministry; and when duly sought, there is no potency in all the resistance of earth, or all the machinations of hell, to foil his wisdom, or neutralize his might, and turn back his pledged and irresistible help. He waits to be inquired of, and the prayers of which Rationalism



disputes the worth, and to which skepticism denies any relevancy or any cogency, he comes down to answer. The concerts of prayer, which Scotland suggested, and New England, by Jonathan Edwards adopted, and England by Andrew Fuller and others planted there, were appeals to this Great Agent; and the whole story of the translations and conversions and martyrdoms and harvestings of the foreign mission field, in continents and islands, is but one simple suggestion to the churches that the Divine Helper, one and unchanging, is true to his word, and is sufficient for his work.

Far as our churches invoke and honor him, he will meet their every draft. The faith at which the world scoffs, is yet the one secret principle over which Heaven bends approvingly, and before which Hell quails to her innermost depths, transfixed by its irresistible energy.

The Spirit in the Bible, and the Spirit in the collected church, and the Spirit in the regenerate heart, has been clothed, by the purpose of the Father and the promise of the Son, with all needed light and energy. He made the material world; he can remake the moral world. When we forget dependence and fail to ask and win the proffered resources, we are not merely liable to a passive impoverishment, but we become active in a positive and terrible depravation.

As Bunyan picturesquely puts it, Doubting Castle may be rebuilt, and Giant Despair recalled to a new-fed life. See him under new names, the lord of a goodly caravan-serai, the home of all opinions and all nationalities. He will be aided by the Giant Slaygood and the Giant Grim,

whom Bunyan saw slain, but who can be restored to a new activity under a new nomenclature. The fields of speculation, which the old pilgrims found so treacherous, will be planted with the groves of a new Academe, and be decked with the piazzas to the porch of a new Stoicism. The Lady Diffidence, which in Bunyan's time meant Habitual Distrust, and in Paul's time would have been called Chronic Unbelief, will be queenly occupant of the castle as the Lady Liberalism. The pilgrims, who will not accept the livery of the new host, will serve, having tenanted the dungeons for the requisite time, to garnish with their skeletons, scraped, wired, and varnished, the surgical museums of the great pageant of the new faith that has replaced God's oracles and covenant and Messiah. Will they last? Only till the measure of the provocation below is filled, and the long-drawn patience on high is exhausted. Then the end.

If, as some would present the case, the Sovereign of the universe is really the "Unknowable," then, it seems to follow, that as respects our race he is also the "Untalkable," and whilst we are condemned to grope in irremediable blindness, it is a predestined necessity of his nature that, far as man is concerned, he, the God, is voiceless and dumb. Occupying a throne to which our speculations even cannot soar, much less our prayers climb, it is idle to believe that he should ever descend from it to attempt for our guidance a revelation, much less to accept, in our behalf, an incarnation that should redeem, regenerate, and enfranchise us. Over duty rests a thick haze never to be pierced, and over destiny as well. The

old gospel of our fathers bids us take, at the foot of the tree of Golgotha, a God-sealed pardon, and to look off beyond the grave as to a welcoming home on high, of cloudless splendor and endless felicity. But now we are to unclutch our hold on this cross; to strip off the wedding-garment of his own everlasting righteousness, the free gift of the Ransomer; and to dismiss the hope of reunion with our lost friends, so many and so excellent, who leaned on this faith, and died expecting to greet us there before his throne.

Certainties so blessed, around which have gathered the memories of patriarchs and confessors and martyrs, earth's noblest tenantry for many a generation, are all to be renounced. Instead, we are to solace ourselves with the Great Uncertainty, and to look steadily as we can, with sinking hearts and dying eyes, to the "Grand Perhaps." Paul exulted in a "Yea and Amen" gospel of a Christ who was the Truth, the very Amen, solemn and unquestionable, immovable, and final. But Modern Progress and the Rationalism of the age cry, "Yea and Nay." There MAY BE another life, and a Judge, and a Helper, and there MAY BE NOT. Pillow, poor weakling of a day, thy head, in the hour of its last woes and uttermost needs, on this rocking line, MAY BE and MAY BE NOT, PERADVENTURE and WHO KNOWS. Renounce the dream of a Father's home on high. Strip off the wedding-garment, for the marriage-supper does not come off; the Bridegroom is dead. He who was proclaimed as "the First and the Last" has been effectively snuffed out by the "Latest News" from the last philosophy. The Church,

the Bride of the Lamb, may now go away deploring into a perpetual widowhood. Fret out thy little day of earthly life as thou best canst, and in the hour of dissolution shoot out thy being in the wild forlorn plaint, "Whitherward?—what?" The grave has no outgate. Bible and Christ and God are vanished.

Is this a reasonable conclusion, a sufficient refuge, a final and unquestionable settlement? No: by the reason that we have; by the conscience that stirs at times even within the most obdurate; by all the memories of the past; by all the omens of the future,—it is not rational, or just, or wise, or true.

Christ is, ever blessed be his name. The necessities of all people required his advent. The consciences even of his enemies have begrudgingly admitted his majesty and goodness. The Man of sorrows is neither myth, nor blunderer, nor deceiver of the people. He sways the centuries that he has inherited. He sheds forth, even at this hour, over a gainsaying world, the Spirit that he promised. From myriads on myriads of saints, calmed, renewed, established, gladdened, and sanctified by the Spirit's present workings, comes back the thundering acclaim, "He is our God; we have waited for him; our fathers have waited for him." And when the hour strikes, out of the rending heaven, and across the emptied graves and the shuddering earth, shall come down, shall shine out, this—the Desire of all nations—the Judge of all the generations of the race, Lord of the quick and the dead.

Science has no other solution, history no other clue. The heart and the reason and the craving imagination

sink adoring before him, the very Truth, the only Life, the Everlasting God, naught beyond him, naught beside him; and his people shall be for ever with him, content with his fulness, and radiant in the reflection of his holiness, unsullied and eternal.





VIII.

THE BAPTISTS  
AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.



## THE BAPTISTS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

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THE late Robert Southey, in his closing years a staunch churchman, and with no small knowledge of ecclesiastical history, and whose biography of Wesley our Methodist brethren, notwithstanding some of the writer's prejudices, have been compelled to adopt and reprint as the best literary portraiture of their reverend founder, has spoken strongly of another worthy, who, though once a clergyman of the Establishment, left its precincts and expended his energies on the outside of its fellowship. Roger Williams was, in Southey's estimate, "the best and greatest of the Welshmen," and he pronounced him deserving of the honors that have been intercepted by William Penn.\* His allusion is to the influence in favor of a diffused religious freedom. Voltaire, whose power in the literary world was once almost despotic, has given to the founder of Pennsylvania a high place as establishing toleration among the first principles of government. In pages which Southey was more deliberate in preparing, in an article contributed to the *Quarterly Review*,† he spoke of Williams as

\* *Selections from Lett. of Southey*, by Warter (Lond., 1856), I. 390 I.

† October, 1813.

the one who "began the first civil government upon earth that gave equal liberty of conscience," and describes him as "one of the best men who ever set foot upon the New World, a man of genius and of virtue." Archbishop Whately, a churchman also, speaks of the Pilgrim Fathers as having compelled the ever-venerable Roger Williams, the great champion of toleration, to fly from them to Rhode Island, where he founded a colony on his own truly Christian system.\*

The cause of religious freedom is now far in advance of its position in the days of American colonization. Various influences have contributed in co-operation, or in mutual counteraction, to bring about this enhancement of honor for the advocates of enfranchised religion alike from the control and from the endowment of the state. In our own times, an illustrious statesman of Italy, not long gone, had it as the great watchword of his policy—Count Cavour it was—"A free church in a free state." The church dominant and the state its liege vassal had been for centuries the law of pontifical rule and the first term in Roman Catholic loyalty. Cavour's study of British literature and institutions had made his views what they were. The kingdom from which he derived these principles has not yet ventured fully to conform its own institutions to this great scheme. Yet few now venture to impugn in English literature the wisdom of a larger religious toleration.

Who inaugurated the change? has been a question variously answered. Some point to the French chancellor,

\* *Annotations to Bacon's Essays.* Essay V.: Of Adversity.

L'Hôpital; others, to Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*. But whatever the theory of his romance, the great Englishman, in practice, held to the bringing of heretics to death, and is said to have sanctioned personally the use of torture. Bodin, a great French jurist, was said to teach similar principles; but they were attributed to his having Jewish blood, which caused him to lean to the side of the proscribed, and naught appears of his having been able to give any practical application to the principles. His own views on religion were supposed skeptical; and lessons from such a source would have less efficacy. In later days, Jeremy Taylor, when the Episcopal Church lay under the cloud of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, was in favor of the liberty of prophesying; but when power was regained by the bishops of the British Church, no trace is found of the good prelate's aiming to give efficacy to these the lessons of the day of the church's adversity. Locke was on the side of religious freedom, but he had not the honor of embodying the principle in state constitutions.

Yet English Protestantism, in her martyr age under Mary the bloody; and English Puritanism, in her long days of suffering; and Scotch Presbyterianism, in the days of the Covenanters' worship on the moors and sufferings on the gibbet,—all tended toward the gradual development of a principle, which no one of these great schools was able fully to enunciate, or willing, when in power, systematically to pursue. The wise man declares, that God, in his providence, alternating for our race prosperity and adversity, has set "the one over against the other, to the

end that man might find nothing after him,"\* or, in other words, when in prosperity be compelled to acknowledge indebtedness to God as its bounteous Sender, and Himself its indispensable complement, and in the season of gloom and trial to bow submissively and penitently to God as its righteous Dispenser and Himself its only adequate solace, thus never wafted above dependence on the Highest, and never sunk beyond relief at the hand of the Mightiest; and so shut up to a perpetual trust and an indefeasible sonship and pupilage. So, too, has it been in the history of God's churches: we find the schools of the wisest and best continually displaying their incompetency, and driven back from themselves on the conduct of a wiser and the grace of a kinder rule than was found in their own nature.

The progress of Protestantism in Britain has been largely aided by the volumes of John Foxe, picturesque, simple, earnest, and solemn. The earliest edition of that great record was not in English, but in Latin, the learned tongue of the age; a small volume compared with the subsequent folios, and prepared on the Continent, where Foxe was a fugitive from the sway of Gardiner and Bonner and Cardinal Pole. In that earlier tome, now a book of great rarity and high cost, are some narratives, that a kind regard for the heroic sufferers induced the good Foxe to withdraw from the later issues. One of these states the appeal made to Rogers, afterward a martyr, and a manful one, in the days of Queen Mary, to induce him to interpose his offices with the government of Edward VI.,

\* Eccles. vii. 14.



the Protestant predecessor of Queen Mary, to prevent the cruel death by burning of some Anabaptists. Rogers—for good men are not always and altogether good—replied to his fellow-Protestant, that burning was not so painful a death. His friend, supposed to have been Foxe himself, smiting the hand of Rogers, replied, that he might yet have occasion to know that it was not so easy; and among the early victims of Edward's sister, truculent Mary, was this same Rogers. Spite of the claims of wife and children, he faltered not; but made, blessed be God, a heroic end. But probably, in the eyes of those who were readers of that first Latin edition, and in Foxe's own eyes, the stake where, as these on the Continent heard of it, Rogers was bound and burned, seemed somewhat of a retribution as well as a stage of heroic perseverance. So good old Hugh Latimer had thought little of the piety, and rated but meanly the patient and cheerful endurance, of Anabaptist martyrs, whom he too had heard of as suffering in the same manner. Meeting, as we doubt not Latimer and Rogers did, in the presence of the same Christ, the Anabaptist sufferers, for whom they had in the early years little commiseration, both had occasion to adore and rejoice in that Saviour's grace, which overlooked in both of them their adherent imperfections and errors, and taught them, in the Beatific Vision, to find, not in self or brethren, but in him, the one Christ and the one God, that absolute perfection which left "nothing after him" to be desired, to be missed, and to be corrected.

So their descendants, on either shore of the Atlantic, have cause to bless God for the wondrous brightness and

value of their services to the cause of truth, of national freedom, and of religious fruitfulness. The eulogies have been ardent, and they might well be so; but here, too, as in the case of the earlier worthies of the Marian era, God has not suffered his people to find, in their human ancestry, however noble and saintly and blessed, a perfection of influence and a symmetry entire and unimpeachable. There, too, men, if candid and teachable, find themselves shut up to the conclusion, that man in some aspect and at some time fails, and that God alone is the Unfailing.

The vacated pulpits, the prisons, and the pillories of the mother-country, and the wildernesses of this Western world, have borne record to the stern endurance and the resolute energy and the prayerful trust of these men of God. And our own people in them, and in the scatterings and siftings of Waldensians and Huguenots and Palatines and Hollanders against our own wild coast, in the early days of the feeble colonies, have had men whose story bears inspection, and whose example deserves devout honor. But still, back of their imperfections and insufficiencies, lies the same horizon, stretching out and calling "after" God—a long, wide field that his faithfulness and his truthfulness only can adequately fill.

Of the man whom Southey and Whately eulogized, and whom Bancroft—a scholar not of our communion—has placed so vividly and brilliantly on the pages of the national annals, an old Puritan worthy, Cotton Mather, had said, that he, Roger Williams, "had a windmill in his head." Gather up such comments, and the founders

of Rhode Island may be disparaged; but a sheaf, full and ill-odored, of such censure, would not certainly serve to honor the cause of the common Master. Our own denomination has been sometimes suspected of canonizing this worthy. As a people, it is a fault of which we are as little guilty as our brethren, it may be. Certainly, the acclaim of genuine admiration, about the character and exploits of English and American Puritans, we as Baptists have not habitually or generally sought to lessen or drown; we have rather shared it and swelled it. In the canonization of Romish saints, it is customary to employ one who argues the case against the proposed candidate for saintly honors, and whom the populace call "the devil's counsel," impeaching, disparaging, and travestying the new saint. Imagine such a work among Protestant Christians, and how easy were it to gather from the missiles of controversy, criticism, and enmity, masses of scorn and invective. The Wesleys, to whom Westminster Abbey has lately opened its doors, suffered largely in this way. Smollett, a man of some genius as a poet and romance-writer, yet, in his *History of England*, has most unworthily portrayed men immeasurably in mental power and moral worth his own superiors. So the David Brainard whom Yale expelled and refused to restore; and the Henry Martyn over whose weakness, as unnatural, so kindly a man as Sir James Mackintosh commented, so unhappily and unjustly, we think; and that great name in American history, the elder Jonathan Edwards, so towering in intellect, but who speaks with so plaintive a frankness of his own feeble spirits,—might all, to an

industrious *Advocatus Diaboli*—the scholar who should thus hold a brief for the devil, the “Accuser of the Brethren”—furnish a theme of sarcastic depreciation. George Buchanan, the Scotch scholar and patriot, whom Jesuit poets have represented as in his last days unable to recollect the Lord’s Prayer; and the Beza; and the Calvin; and the stern John Knox, whom Scotland so justly and reverently honors,—how have they each borne the most terrible denunciations. From Luther’s days down to those of Scotch Covenanters and British Quakers, how much have raillery and reviling and misrepresentation done to belittle and vilify men of whom yet the world was not worthy?

Roger Williams was a native of Wales, born, according to what seem the most credible accounts, in 1599, in Glamorganshire. An antiquary of our own city thinks that he has ascertained his birthplace to have been at Cum Towey, near Neath, and that he was related to a family, the Williamses, of Aberpergwm, long settled and still residing there, and who claim a relationship to Oliver Cromwell. For the great Protector is sprung from a family of the name of Williams, who, intermarrying with one of the kin of the Thomas Cromwell, so powerful as a statesman under Henry VIII., applied for, and, as was then easily done, obtained, a change of name to that of their great patron and kinsman. When the protectorate of Cromwell was closed by the restoration of Charles II., a nephew of Oliver, who sat in the British Parliament, applied for an act changing his name back to Williams again—a fact in after-times as little to his credit as it seemed in that

day useful for his ease and influence. He bartered abiding distinction for cheap obscurity. If the founder of Rhode Island were of the Aberpergwm family, it would account for the representation, sometimes made, that Williams pleasantly claimed, at times, to be of the blood of the great Protector; for that Aberpergwm family now lay such claim. The crest of the Aberpergwm family, and the Welsh motto, were at least singularly appropriate to the after-story of the builder of Providence. The household crest was the lamb and flag, and its old British legend, "Suffered that he might conquer." When a mere lad, Williams attracted the notice of Sir Edward Coke, the great lawyer, by his diligence in taking sermon notes, and was placed in the Bluecoat school of London, that has turned out so many great men from Wesley's days to Coleridge's and Havelock's. He seems to have studied at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and graduated there. His name, Roger, had been given him, probably, in honor of a great British commander in the Netherlands, whom Camden praises for his valor, and whom the Earl of Leicester, the English commander-in-chief, praised as worth his weight in gold for wisdom equal to his valor. A public and elaborate funeral was given him; and for a time, probably, it seemed as if the little namesake in Glamorganshire would hardly rival the baronet and soldier thus honored by a national service of entombment. But peace has her victories; and the fame of the Netherland battle-field is, in our days, almost vanished before the memories of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. In the church, the Puritan proclivities of



Williams awakened persecution. He had been, for a time, shielded by an eminent namesake, then Bishop of Lincoln, the same afterward Archbishop of York, who at one time had been chancellor under James I., and whom Laud supplanted and persecuted. Williams found his departure from England so hurried that he could not, to his regret, pay a visit to his friend, the aged Sir Edward Coke. Coke's last stage had, for his patriotic services and his share in drawing up the Bill of Rights, made his close more happy and illustrious than were the later days of his great rival, Lord Bacon. In his New England settlement, the gifts and zeal of Williams awakened regard and admiration. But he was early and urgent and outspoken in his denunciation of conforming to what he deemed the grave errors of the Established Church, and would require from consistent church members separation from its services. Most of the Puritans would not go that length; and to some later critics such rigid separation has seemed inconsistent with his large views of soul-liberty and the relations of the church to the state. We think the difficulties disappear when it is remembered that his separation was to be inside the church, in its constituency and membership. As to the state, he held it early not entitled to punish breakers of what are called duties of the first table, the earlier of the ten commandments, those enjoining our duties to God. These offences he held the state not entitled to punish, except where they involved a breach of civil peace. He afterward formulated his doctrine under the name of "Soul-Liberty," a quaint but expressive phrase, and carrying a



world of revolution in its brief, terse syllables. His mind, like that of many of his race among the Welsh of Great Britain and among the Bretons of France—a Pelagius, an Abelard, and a Lamennais,—had the courage of its own convictions; but also sacrificed, it may be, at times, to logical cohesion, the interests of practical usefulness.

Though he had the esteem of many most excellent men in the colony, he had awakened alarm. The ultimate result was, that Hugh Peters, a much less clear thinker and a much ruder manager, gave him notice of his exclusion from the church to which he had belonged. Measures were adopted, to use the phrase of Masson, the biographer of Milton, “to kidnap” Williams, place him on ship-board, and return him, a banished and discredited man, to England. The banishment he bravely encountered; but the deportation he evaded by seeking a new home in the wilderness among the savages, to whom he had shown sympathy, and by whom he was kindly received, though, as he says, “bed and bread,” the repose and the food of civilized life, were long things unknown.

When wishing to visit England—not as a deported, discredited man, but to publish a work on his views of religious persecution—he had to seek the Dutch settlement of our own New Amsterdam, then under magistrates from Holland, and thence to find his way to the old country. He found an Indian war raging around and against the city, and his kindly offices with the Indians were proffered and used toward securing a return of peace. In England, he launched his work, now peculiarly identified

with his name as an author and with the great question of religious toleration and persecution.

He had in England the friendship of the younger Vane, of Milton, whom he aided with instruction in the Dutch language, and of Cromwell. Men like the Scotchman Baillie, deeply averse to his views on religious toleration, seem yet to have been conciliated by his spirit, and Baillie speaks of him as "his friend." Baillie was then in attendance on the great Westminster Assembly of Divines, in which the Presbyterians of England and Scotland were the chief controlling power, though a few Episcopalians and some Independents belonged to it. In that body, by its preachers and in the sermons of its preachers before the two houses of Parliament, the sentiment of toleration was denounced as big with all evils of complicity with falsehood and sin. And had the views of the majority in that assembly found adoption by the Parliament, and by Cromwell above all, Presbyterianism would have been established with but a mere toleration of Independency, whilst a denial of Infant Baptism would have been made an offence punishable with imprisonment.

The army and navy had become largely pervaded with our own denominational views. Cromwell, himself an Independent, was in close relations with valiant officers and soldiers and sailors who were thoroughly Baptist in their views of doctrine and polity. Williams returned to his American home; and it was well he had done so, for his book, innocent as we now regard it, was ordered to be burned by the hangman; and had the writer remained, harsh measures might have visited himself personally.

Now, of that great assembly of divines and scholars where Selden actually sat, and to which Ussher had been invited but never came, we would speak with unaffected reverence and affection. Baxter, not of them, pronounces a warm eulogy on their worth and power. But when they set themselves to prove, as Milton said in effect, that

“Presbyter was but old priest writ large,”

their own Presbyterianism of the confession and catechism, both which they had launched, and of the covenant prepared in Scotland, which, with slight modifications, they had adopted and signed in England,—when this they would make, to the exclusion of the Episcopalian and the Independent and the Baptist, the sole faith of the land and of its colonies, it was but copying in a rounder hand, “writ large,” as John Milton phrases it, the sacerdotalism that they and their fathers had denounced in Bancroft and punished so sternly in Laud. Men, as Cromwell more than once firmly and pathetically pleaded, who had ventured their lives under the national banner by land and by sea to secure the liberty of the people, were not to be required thus to do violence to their own consciences. The liberty of the nation, so won, had well earned “soul-liberty” for the nation’s champions. Yet men like the godly Samuel Rutherford, the Scotsman, whose letters Baxter is said once to have pronounced a book next in place to the Bible, and Baxter himself, the writer of the *Saint’s Everlasting Rest*,—preached and wrote against the new toleration. Herbert Palmer, a man of genius and piety and noble connexions, and of high place

in the Westminster Assembly, preached also earnestly, if not violently, against the doctrine. Petitions came up from London, numerous signed, and sustaining the same views. Do we recall these facts, in order to disparage the holy and able men who thus misjudged? Not so; but to remind the Christians of our day that the religious immunities, now so free and so unquestioned, were in those days bought by a great fight of afflictions, and as by cruel mockings and scourgings, and at the risk also of bonds and imprisonment.

Our own Baptist denomination was so manifestly and universally identified with this question of religious toleration, that when some riotous soldiers of the Baptist faith were brought before Sir Matthew Hale for interrupting the worship of others, that upright magistrate emphasized the inconsistency of it by men who as Baptists stood so largely and strongly for liberty of conscience.

It has been said, that Roger Williams was not the discoverer of this great truth. He did not claim it. He frankly spoke of earlier worthies of his own denomination who had written—being in confinement and denied the use of paper—their views on the paper stopper of the flask containing the milk with which they were fed. That stopper was unrolled into a sheet, and the milk was used to write upon it; then, the sheet being held by the friends who received it to the fire, it became discolored and legible, and thus he said it had been before taught. And Featley, a learned man, one of the few Episcopalians in the Westminster Assembly, a good man, but a bitter one, wrote of the book of Williams, mistaking and misrepre-

senting this statement. He said, in allusion to the religious and fraternal tone of Williams' book, that it was milk containing some rat's bane.

Not the originator of the truth, but proclaiming and defending it at the peril of his own freedom and reputation and influence, he was so far worthy of gratitude as its earnest and self-sacrificing champion. So Jenner did not claim to have discovered the power of vaccination. Milkmaids, long before, had perceived the power of the eruption to neutralize the dreaded and often fatal small-pox. Jenner staked his medical fame against the denunciations and dislike of his professional brethren in the promulgation of the truth, and he earned righteously the reward that the Parliament and a grateful nation awarded him. Harvey is praised for giving currency to the great fact of the circulation of the blood; but it was virtually hinted at by one of the old Christian Fathers centuries before, and Solomon is thought by many to have taught it when talking of the pitcher emptied and filled, and the wheel revolving at fountain and cistern of the human body. But because Harvey did not first suspect or discover it, does Science erase his name from the scarcely-crowded list of great discoverers? So moral science and religious freedom needed a stalwart and sinewy champion, and Roger Williams was such. He had the sympathy of his friend, the younger Sir Harry Vane, one of the greatest statesmen of Britain, to whom Milton accords the distinction, which most statesmen have scarce deserved, of knowing the bounds that part the civil from the religious power. He had the sympathy of Cromwell,



of Milton, of Hutchinson, of Baptist soldiers like Harrison and Dean and Lawrence, and of Baptist sailors like Admiral Lawson, the associate and compeer of Blake; but he arrayed against him the masses—the religious masses; and the herd of statesmen who walk in the well-worn path of old precedents; and the distrust, loud, sacred, and inveterate, of some very good and very devout Christians. He persisted. It was said that England would be made what Amsterdam had become by its wide toleration—a very sink of all errors and of prodigious evils. But he feared God and fainted not, and God's providence blessed his courage; and God's people in these later ages, and over wide continents—farther west than his Indian friends ever travelled, farther east than his incipient mission zeal had ever ventured to spread its wings of holy enterprise—God's people have learned to acknowledge tardily, and some of them very begrudgingly, the justice of these bold principles, and the safety of these greatly-decried liberties for the individual conscience and for the separately-worshipping assembly.

Yet he did not continue long a Baptist, but went over to the Seekers. Some understood, in that day, by this term, a body deserting all religion and sinking, in the phraseology of the day, into Nullifidians, or men of no faith. It was a grievous misconception. Like the Plymouth Brethren of our own time, they leaned too much on the distinct line of spiritual descent. They wanted a regular traceable line of spiritual genealogy, like the apostolic orders of the High Church Episcopacy, or like the newly-desiderated apostolate of the followers of Edward Irving.



They waited or sought—hence their name of Seekers—such living apostles, such heaven-sealed orders. They died without the sight. But they lost not their care for man or their faith in God's great doctrines of the gospel. Vane was with Williams; some suppose Vane to have been the teacher of Roger in this expectant attitude of irresolution; others, like George Horn—a divine from Holland, then visiting England, and writing of its religious bodies—seem to regard Williams as the instructor, in this dubiety and irresolution, of his friend Vane. He was an honored and cherished guest at Vane's residence. He returned to England in later times, and obtained a charter from the restored Stuarts for his colony. A man of fully lovable character, he seems to have been, by the testimony of friends, and even the reluctant concessions of enemies.

His magnanimity was singularly illustrated in his using his knowledge of the Indians, and influence with them, to avert from the colonies that had banished and maligned him the butcheries of an Indian invasion. He learned the Indian language and wrote in it, annexing poetry of his own, English verse of the most rugged character. With the Dutch governor of our own good Manhattan, he discussed the question of the origin of the Indian tribes, his Hollander host inclining to suppose the red man of our own forests and shores of the same stock with Icelanders of Europe. A love of usefulness, and a skill of winning hearts by simplicity and affectionate earnestness, seem in his case to have been marked traits. It is hard, therefore, to see some critics lightly

quoting impeachments of bitter foes upon his motives and his truthfulness. Puritanism itself, the great dominant body, that in some of its chief representatives he withstood and foiled in discussion as to this great principle of religious toleration—Puritanism, we say, has itself suffered sufficiently from satire and malign distortion of character and motive, to make those who would defend it as against the rival fame of Williams to remember that “cruel mockings” have, from the days of Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, been no uncommon attendant on the steps of truly upright and eminently holy men.

Ben Jonson in the early days of the Stuarts, and Butler, of *Hudibras* fame, in the later days of that family, have poured out vials of scorn on the Puritan traits and visage and dress and dialect; but the verdict of dispassionate history has not sustained the satire. And men who know what the power of that great school has been, here and in Britain, on national order and freedom and thrift and valor, may well wonder that champions of Puritanism should seek to bring the like artillery of derision to bear on services and risks and sacrifices like those of the founder of Rhode Island. The ribald songsters of the Restoration have done their worst to besmear the names of the Cromwellian heroes and saints; but each day is making the libel more odious and incredible, and brightening the fame of the libelled into a higher lustre.

Not many years ago the remains of Williams were disinterred. It was found that the roots of an apple tree had penetrated the coffin-walls as they mouldered, and followed the line of the skeleton with a curious fidelity.

It was as if to say, that the righteous are fruitful of good even in the dust of their mouldering. And over a broad republic—every day widening its territory and the sweep of its influence, political, literary, and religious—it seems to-day impossible to say how much of the national order and happiness is traceable to the memory and example of the man there entombed; is the fruitage, under God's benediction, of the sufferings and sacrifices of the weary pilgrim and exile who there found repose.

A free church he taught—as against the logic of good, eminently good, but narrow, fearfully narrow, minds, like that of John Cotton—was safe to hold its own against error and worldly power. The experiment has verified the principle. The churches of primitive Christianity had done it, not only without such aid of the state, but as against the power and bribes and fierce proscriptions of the state, indignant and inveterately prejudiced.

But a free church demands something more than uncurbed license and general indifference. It is not, in our own community, free rum at every corner, breeding a brutal intemperance; it is not free fraud, playing its own dire will at ballot-box and registry-roll; it is not free speculation, draining your treasuries and consuming your taxes and bribing your legislatures,—that will enable the state to stand.

So guided and so drugged, it staggers, if its course be unchecked, toward the rule of the strong-willed despotism, as that power shall be intercalated with this, the sway of the infuriated rabble.

A church, really and radically free, needs the Spirit,

the truth, and the presence of God. It will find these in the faith that trusts a present Jehovah. It will lose them if it make liberty, apart from truth and equity, its idol. Truth itself, said Pascal in one of his profound utterances, severed from the love of the truth, may be an idol; and liberty, if it be unprincipled and untaught, of the earth earthy, is the sure bane of a people, and carries dissolution into the party employing it and the nation permitting it.

No theme can be regarded, in our own land and in the age upon which God has cast our lot, as more popular than that of liberty. We stamp the head on our coins; and a foreign artist, from the country which gave to our Revolutionary forefathers a La Fayette, proposes to rear its towering image as a statue and lighthouse at the gates of our own harbor; there, the winds of ocean sighing around its head, the waves of ocean breaking at its feet, to hail the emigrant landing on our shores, with its promise as to the spirit welcoming him throughout our institutions, and thus also to remind the American, quitting his country for the Old World, that in such a name he is to brace himself against the allurements of mediæval art, and by such a memory to estimate aright the real worth of ancient despotisms, gorgeous but oppressive, costly and outworn.

But we are, perchance, in danger of forgetting that liberty, if a priceless treasure, is also a trust not to be discharged without effort and eager vigilance and anxious sacrifice. It will not be its own guardian. Back of nations and governments, its security lies in the individual

conscience. Education and religion are among its indispensable conditions, and he who knew, better than sage or jurist has ever gauged them, the capacities and the necessities of the human soul, the glories and the sorrows awaiting the nation, for he is the Wielder of the providence which shapes the annals of the entire race,—he it is who has said in one brief but inexhaustible sentence, “The truth shall make you free.” It is only as man gets access to the real, the true, the innermost core of things, and the great controlling principle of duty, right, and happiness; it is only in science, as we reach the truly existent; and, in art, conceive and reproduce the intrinsically beautiful; and, in faith, get near to him, the Great Verity of revelation and salvation, the Way, the Truth, and the Life,—that man becomes personally and unconquerably free. Fact—the combined grouping of the great facts of God’s making and God’s telling and God’s giving—the fact is the very basis of true freedom.

Another great lesson of the Book, in which the world’s Maker tells the story of the world’s making; and the world’s Ruler lays down his laws for the world’s ruling; and the world’s Redeemer discloses the great mystery of the world’s rescuing and restoring; and the world’s Judge lays bare the grand materials he is storing up for the world’s inevitable and materiable dooming,—is, that only as the Book of God becomes the manual of earth’s lore does the race become permanently, innocently, and fraternally free. He adds, by his apostle, a lesson reserved for the age of higher illumination, that was to follow his own ascension and his return to the Father, that “where

the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," where the Paraclete, proffering his influences, is welcomed, heeded, and cherished, there only does man rise to the dignity of the Lord's freedman. He warns us against the false teachers who, promising liberty, should be themselves the servants of corruption; or who, in the hapless bondage of sin themselves, could never become the channels of a true illumination and the messengers of a permanent and indefeasible enfranchisement. The closet, the sanctuary, the Sunday-school, conversions, revivals, missions, all the enginery of a resuscitated faith, and an energetic charity, and a world-wide hope, are among the necessities of a true freedom. For the Spirit's presence is the life-blood of liberty in any high, just sense of the term; and this Spirit, thus indispensable to the experience of soul-liberty, is a jealous and holy Spirit, who must be revered; a comprehensive, bounteous, and self-surrendering principle in the regenerate heart, that seeks light for all people and blessedness for the whole tenantry of the round globe.

Out of these Bible relations, as between freedom and truth, and as between liberty and the Divine Paraclete, grow, then, our great social needs. We need, as persons, as households, as neighborhoods and denominations and nations, and as a race, a free press. Milton pleaded eloquently for it in his *Areopagitica*. How did the State Licensor and the Church Index of books to be expurgated and books to be utterly prohibited stand up against the claim; but the cause of liberty has already gained, in the lands of greatest illumination and progress, its claim. It is a claim to be reopened and reargued, if the Syllabus



and the Personal Infallibility become the law of Christendom. When the Prussian government consulted the devout Neander as to the suppression of the work of Strauss by state repression, he counselled its having its free course, whilst Christianity was left free to answer. The result showed the wisdom of the advice. Bunyan spoke plaintively of being scarce able to see out of the eyes into which so much mud of obliquy had been flung. Baxter bore, from Jeffreys, the most flagrant and violent insults, uttered under the sanction of the judge's robes, and as from the bench whence came, in the days of the Stuarts, fines, incarceration, branding, and death. Whitefield, as Cowper painted him, stood "pilloried" on Infamy's high stage and bore the pelting scorn of half an age. But the press of our day prints the biography of the evangelist, and multiplies copies of the *Pilgrim* and the *Saint's Everlasting Rest*, and never, except as antiquarians disturb the dust-bin, now recalls the unsavory missiles, with which the world once thought to extinguish the reality of faith and the might of true godliness.

And so society needs, if it is to be made free and kept free, a free school. It is only an instructed and a well-principled people that can value and retain the freedom inherited from patriotic and religious forefathers; and society has its right over the household, to require that, if its citizens vote, they know something of the principles of morality, and the story of the nation's past, and the outlines and scope of the nation's future duty and destiny. Back of ballot-box, lies the town-school, and an education that shall prevent the peasantry from becoming the pas-

sive, blind dupes of either the demagogue, the fanatic, or the priest.

And so, too, the free church is needed ; not the community, that, thrusting aside Scripture and superseding God's oracles by man's traditions, affects to overrule all secular legislation by its ecclesiastical canons and political interdicts ; but the church, as Christ left it, building a kingdom not of this world, and in its separate, self-governed assemblies preparing men to confront, personally and directly, an open Bible, a present Saviour, and a regenerating Spirit.

Such free church is of the essence, in this nineteenth Christian century, of a free state. Aside from it, we may see spiritual domination crushing out the last mutterings of dissent, and restoring the rule of Dominic, as it was once in Mexico of the New World, and as it was in Madrid and Rome of Europe, and at Goa of Asia in the Old World.

Our churches, in their missions, did their share in breaking down for the Bible, God's free code, its way to the heathen myriads of India, against the barriers set up by the great East India Company ; and backed, too, though those barriers long were, by the vast power of the British government at home. Whilst God's Spirit is invoked and trusted and obeyed, they can do the work over again, if it needs to be done ; and by the help of the Omnipresent and Omnipotent Christ, it is not arrogance to say, that they can renew the conflict and repeat the victory, in the right and might of him who to the end of the world is with his loyal followers.

As the dying Wesley said, "the best of all is, God is with us." Shrivelled and wrinkled, and already smitten with death, the poor old man's arm that was feebly waved as he said the words; but the truth that came from the pale lips is imperishable and imprescriptible. Jehovah floods with his omnipotence the whole field of human activities and perils. Trust him, ye people, and your cause is surer than the action of gravitation, and its movement to final triumph swifter than the path of the light. A God behind it; a God before it; a God all around it. He inherits the past, dominates the future, and bids his people only know, grasp, and use the present.



IX.

THE BAPTISTS

OF THE

COMMONWEALTH AND PROTECTORATE





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WHEN we speak of the Commonwealth as it arose on the death of Charles I., we intend to include also the Protectorate of Cromwell; and as many of the men formed in that age did not end their earthly career until years after Cromwell had been gathered to the tomb, we cannot avoid grouping to some extent the period of the Stuart Restoration, and a monarchy readjusted on the British throne, with the era of the institutions which had preceded, and to some extent had conditioned and limited, such restoration.

Three great influences were contending for the control of the people. The first was a supreme love for the Bible; its motto, "It is written." It was an age of great events and of remarkable men. The British constitution, so long the boast of the nation and the object of admiring or envious regard on the part of other peoples, cannot be understood without a thorough review of that era in English history. For a time it seemed doubtful whether the old kingly rule of the Tudors and the Stuarts would not permanently give place to republican institutions,

such as the scholars of the land had pondered in the history of Greece and Rome, and which had been in later times reproduced in the free cities of Italy, as in the Swiss confederacy on the Continent, and in the republic of the United Netherlands, as the last arose after the magnificent birth-struggle of Holland and her fellow-provinces against the truculent power of Spain and Rome.

The original purpose of the British patriots who withstood James the father and his son, Charles the First, in their encroachments on the powers of Parliament and the national freedom, had certainly contemplated no such sweeping overthrow; but the necessities of the conflict, and the proved duplicity of their king, and the reckless, aggressive despotism of some of his counsellors, like Strafford, shut up the men who had originally taken arms to vindicate rights most ancient and sacred, as did Eliot, Pym, and Hampden, to make their protest effectual and their reforms abiding by safeguards, that sheared royalty of its trappings, and finally brought the king, as a truce-breaker and a subverter of the constitution under which his crown was held, to the ghastly, bloody scaffold.

In resisting the forces that sustained the king, the Parliamentary leaders soon discerned, as Cromwell early saw, and forcibly stated it to his kinsman, the great patriot, John Hampden, the need of enlisting a class of men as soldiers who had intelligence and religious principle, a Bible in their knapsacks, and a conscience behind their sharp bayonets. The soldiers thus raised, who prayed as well as fought, soon proved themselves invincible. Cromwell, whose valor and practical wisdom soon raised him

to higher posts, and clothed him with widening influence, and made him necessary to the party of reform and of freedom, had, we believe, no other than honorable and self-sacrificing designs in his original engagement. As he afterward said, "No man rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going." It was true of him, that, not aiming at present advancement, the very needs of his country and the strong rush of God's providential leadings made the more firm and resolute and persistent mind soon the master-spirit of the struggle of the land, and, we may say, of the age.

It was an age which had recent and sad experience of the need of resisting oppression, and that form of tyranny especially which leaned on spiritual despotism. There were men living and acting who had the Spanish Armada among the recollections of their childhood. Its memory was about Hobbes, the child of a parish minister, in his nursery. The projects that had been foiled in the detection and failure of the Gunpowder Plot were among the youthful memories that shaped these men's judgments of contemporary political movements. They did not mean that in their time the funeral pyres of Smithfield should be rekindled; or that the St. Bartholomew massacre in France, which the Roman Pontiff had hailed with so wild an exultation; or the terrible butcheries of Alva in Holland, the smoke and gore of which had chilled each Protestant heart through all Europe,—should be re-enacted upon their own quiet island. Whilst they in England and Scotland were in collision with their ill-advised king, there occurred, in the sister and depend-

ent island of Ireland, the terrible Irish massacre, like an outburst of hidden volcanic fire. To relieve its sufferers, the affrighted and plundered survivors, contributions were raised not only in England, but in Protestant Holland. Before the memory of that dread scene of slaughter and conflagration passed from the minds of Englishmen came the news, when the Protector had now established his power, of the terrible slaughter of the Waldensians in the valleys of Piedmont, and the news also of its awakening, at the Sacred City, papal exultation. There was also the well-known fact, that some of the soldiery whom the ruler of Savoy used in butchering these mountaineers were refugees from Ireland, whom the stern measures of Cromwell had expatriated when he subdued and quelled Ireland, and who but repeated on the mountain-sides and in the vales of Piedmont atrocities which they had first practised on their own Protestant countrymen at home. Cromwell's interposition, through Milton, his foreign secretary, was prompt, decisive, and effectual. Savoy, though a distant power, had learned that the Protector was not a ruler with whom they could presume to be dallying or evasive, and the terrible massacre was stayed from policy, when conscience had been ineffectual to prevent its first inauguration.

A people thus schooled by burning memories to a distrust, intense and deep, of papal domination, leaned earnestly to the study of that Bible whose general use by the laity the papal see had so restricted, discouraged, and forbidden. They had seen Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and long a trusted counsellor of their King Charles in the

affairs of both England and Scotland, recognize, though declining, the offer of a cardinal's hat from the Roman Pontiff. They had felt, on their pastors or their own households or persons, the heavy hand of priestly power as it came down on the Puritan, and in the commonalty alike of field and of camp the cause of Puritanism and national freedom became speedily and almost inseparably identified.

Holland, again, that had, by such prodigies of heroism, valor, and martyr endurance, achieved independence of Spain, the greatest of European monarchies, had been, in the days of the prelatical oppression upon British soil, to many a fugitive both of English and Scottish origin, a place of shelter and of residence more or less prolonged. Its free institutions, its commerce, its industries, were admired and emulated. The first colonies of some of our New England settlements had found such shelter in Holland before turning the prows of their vessels to this Western wilderness. So many a Scottish Presbyterian, who purposed returning to his own Scottish home, had his acquaintance and his education in those free provinces. Our early English Baptists had, in like manner, some of them, found the country, of such large commerce and such open-handed hospitality, their temporary home. Soldiery and peasantry in Britain, then loving and reading their Bibles, had a natural proclivity to remember and to esteem their fellow-Protestants speaking a kindred tongue, but dwelling in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Leyden, or Delft. Dreading the Spaniard, hating Rome, and cherishing freedom, it was an inevitable tendency that the

sympathies of Protestant Britain should flow very naturally toward the other land, with which they were as neighbors so contiguous, and where Protestantism had its free Bible and its free churches.

Baxter and Evelyn, authorities entirely distinct in their alliances and surroundings, join in attesting the early and rapid diffusion of Baptist sentiments among the armies of Cromwell and his fellow-warriors, and the influence which the views of this denomination soon attained with the ruling powers of the time. Baxter regretted, that he had not earlier accepted the appointment of army-chaplain, that he might thus have withstood the spread of denominational views which he held erroneous. When, after delay, he joined the troops, he found his way hedged, and his efficiency less than the good man hoped it would be.

There were men among the clergy of that day, and educated in the English universities, who, when the repressive energies of the old prelacy were withdrawn and their studies in the Scriptures were no longer thus circumscribed by the fear of episcopal severities, joined themselves to the Baptists. Cox, son of a bishop, was such a one. Tombes of Bewdley, the learned antagonist of Baxter on the question of Infant Baptism, was another. Samuel Fisher, such a clergyman, originally of the Established Church, published a folio volume against Infant Baptism. He afterward went over from the Baptists to the Quakers, with whom he became a zealous laborer by the tongue and from the press. Hansard Knollys was another. One of the Dykes, a man whose printed books, as well as his



preachings, were highly valued by the pious—one of his volumes being translated into the German—was another such accession to our body.

But in that day of religious fervor and activity, the pulpit was often occupied by those not exclusively and constantly devoted to the preacher's work. The laity thought it not unfitting, often, to occupy the sacred desk, if thus the lack of a faithful ministry might be supplied. And there were among the laymen uniting themselves to our body some of loftiest worth and high and varied accomplishments. Colonel Hutchinson, himself a man of education and intelligence and varied culture, became, with his wife, Lucy, author of one of the best biographies of the times, a convert to our denominational tenets. So Robert Lilburn, another colonel, brother of the fearless and irrepressible John Lilburn, the free-born Englishman, as the latter called himself, was a Baptist. General Lambert, nearly related to Cromwell himself, is represented by many writers of the times as being also a Baptist.

But the man in the ranks of the army who was most prominent as a Baptist was General Thomas Harrison, called by Andrew Bisset, a living writer in the history of those times, "though one of the bravest and most honest, not one of the wisest, of men." Such was his ardor and enthusiasm in all that he undertook, that Baxter speaks of him as being "of excellent natural parts for affection and oratory, but not well seen [*i. e.* judicious, as the phrase then meant] in the principles of his religion; of a sanguine complexion; naturally of such a vivacity, hilarity, and alacrity as another man hath when he hath drunk a

cup too much." Baxter himself had heard Harrison once in a battle, when the enemy began to flee, with a loud voice break forth into the praises of God "with fluent expression," says Baxter, "as if he had been in a rapture." When King Charles was at Hurst Castle in December, 1648, and learned that troops had been sent by Parliament to bring him to London, and with Harrison in command of them, the king was in apprehension, from what he had heard of the major's enthusiasm, that Harrison might be his assassin. But on the road the king was struck with the appearance of the commander of the military squadron, "gallantly mounted, with a velvet montero on his head, a new buff coat, and a crimson silk scarf around his waist." The king in passing gave a military salute, graciously acknowledged, and was surprised soon to learn that this was the dreaded Major Harrison. The king said, "he looked a real soldier, and if there might be trust in faces, was not the man to be an assassin." Standing before the fire, at the mansion where they rested, in a crowded room, the king singled out Harrison, and drew him into conversation for half an hour. Harrison indignantly disavowed all treacherous intents, but frankly added, that, before the law, great and small must be alike subject. A good man—Newcome—afterward blessed God for having missed Harrison's acquaintance, for he, Newcome, had heard of him as "a most insinuating man," but a very decided Separatist, who might have won Newcome to the same views. He, with Hutchinson, was among the Baptists as judges of the king, signing the warrant for the execution of Charles I. after his

trial. When Oliver Cromwell broke up the Rump Parliament, Harrison accompanied and aided him. After sitting silent and listening to the debates of the body, the great general whispered to his friend Harrison, "This is the time; I must do it." Harrison took Lenthall, the speaker of the Parliament, by the hand, and led him from the speaker's chair. Looking on the mace, which lay on a table, the emblem of the speaker's dignity, Cromwell exclaimed, "What shall we do with this fool's bauble? Here; take it away," said he, turning to give it to a musketeer; and then the sturdy Protector, locking the door, put the key in his pocket. Benjamin West, the American painter, has made this the subject of one of his pictures, which has also been engraved. When Cromwell, with his twelve thousand men, set sail to avenge in Ireland the atrocious massacre, the army observed a day of fasting and prayer before embarkation. Goffe, the regicide, afterward a refugee in Connecticut, and Harrison and Cromwell, each, after prayer by ministers, expounded certain portions of Scripture that seemed pertinent to the occasion. It was by this expedition of Cromwell, which was so effective, that the Rebellion was permanently put down; and to this day, in remembrance of its stern effectiveness, the Irish Catholics have the phrase, to express terrible indignation, "The curse of Cromwell be on you!" As Carlyle says of that expedition, "Cromwell descended on Ireland like the Hammer of Thor. He smote the land once, never to be reunited against him any more."

Besides Hutchinson's and Harrison's signatures to the death-sentence of Charles I., it has also that of Deane,

one of Cromwell's favorite officers, whom a descendant of Deane in his recent biography of the admiral represents as also a Baptist. His master, Cromwell, gave him a command in Scotland, where his influence in preserving peace and order was marked and abiding. He was passionately attached to the person and interests of Cromwell—more so than some other Baptists.

Harrison, with others of these, leaned either to a regular republic, or hoped a return of Christ to the earth in his millennial kingdom, and he became disaffected toward the Protector on his assumption of supreme power. Cromwell seems to have dreaded as well as respected him; and among the last measures of Cromwell's life was an order for the imprisonment of his old fellow-soldier, now an opponent of his sovereign domination. At the return of the king, Charles II., Harrison was brought to trial with circumstances of great indignity and brutal violence, but he preserved a heroic serenity, and suffered with an attachment to the cause of freedom, religious and political, for which we may well cherish and honor the memory of this illustrious Baptist.

It is to be remembered, to the honor of his tolerant spirit, though himself an outspoken Baptist, he had as one of his military chaplains a Mr. Joseph Whiston, "a very pious man," as his nephew, the celebrated William Whiston, declares, "but who wrote several books for Infant Baptism." The soul-liberty for which Roger Williams contended, this Baptist commander recognized in his subordinate chaplain, a Pædobaptist, and yet not, by his rejection of Baptist views, forfeiting the confidence

and regard of his superior officer, so staunch a Baptist himself.

In the fleet of England, which became on the sea as celebrated for its valor and prowess as was the army on land, was a large sprinkling of Baptist officers. When Montague, afterward made Lord Sandwich, was put in charge of this navy by the party who were projecting measures for the restoration of Charles II., he took pains, as his secretary, Pepys, assures us, to remove "the Anabaptist captains" quietly, as far as he could, dreading their especial and instinctive opposition to the measure. But the chief in sway of the body of the fleet was Vice-Admiral Sir John Lawson, a Regular Baptist, who had arisen by merit and valor from a low position. Wild, a clerical poet and satirist of the times, alludes to his as a formidable influence, to be feared in withstanding Monck's and resisting the return of the Stuarts. But Lawson's judgment was in favor of the Restoration, and he brought over the fleet, as did Monck the army. Clarendon, the historian, and long the chief statesman, of Charles II., speaks of Lawson as a very able and brave man, though, as he says, "a mere sea-dog" in the roughness of his habits, but of eminent judgment in the conduct of the navy. He was the real chief in a great engagement at sea in June, 1665, in which the Dutch admiral Opdam was blown up, and Van Tromp, another of the greatest officers of Holland, compelled to retire; a great number of the Dutch vessels being destroyed. Lawson received a wound, which compelled his withdrawal from the deck and command; and the Duke of York, the nominal, be-



coming the real, commander, the fight was broken off, as some think cravenly, and the victory, though a very great one, was prevented from reaching a crushing completeness. Carried home to England, his wound proved fatal. Aspiring to a high marriage for one of his daughters where her affections had been engaged, he raised a portion, as he said to his friend Clarendon on his deathbed, which would leave his widow and remaining daughters destitute; and the dying warrior besought for them a pension. Clarendon secured it as long as he was in power; but being himself displaced not long after, the family were probably deprived of it. Clarendon, no friend of Baptists, is large in his praises, declares him to have shared in the great victories of Blake, which still remain among the highest naval illustrations of British valor, and pronounces him, withal, "one of the most modest of men."

The Bible enumerates "the honorable women" who clung to the apostles and the gospel. It is not unfitting to allude to some of the same sex who, in these days of conflict, adhered to our denominational confession. Chambers, in his *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, speaks of a Lady Wallace, baptized when the army of Cromwell came into Scotland; and on our shores you will remember a Lady Moody of our faith, settled on Long Island Sound in the early days of the government of Stuyvesant over New Amsterdam. Mrs. Hutchinson, the daughter of Sir Allen Apsley, the lieutenant of the Tower, stood not alone among the cultured women of rank who joined themselves to our churches.



Among the great preachers of the age was Vavasor Powell, called, for his zeal and energy, the Apostle of Wales, a staunch Baptist. Kiffin, one of their preachers in London, was a wealthy merchant as well. But from some cause, Kiffin, though a good man, seems to have been somewhat disaffected toward his greater contemporary, the illustrious author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan. Two of Kiffin's grandsons, young men of piety, took part in the ill-advised rising in favor of the Duke of Monmouth, and were among the victims of Jeffreys. When James II. found his Protestant subjects alienated from him, he endeavored to enlist Kiffin, then aged, in his favor by summoning the old afflicted merchant and pastor to court; but Kiffin alluded frankly to the terrible blow suffered in the death of his grandsons, the Hewletts. The stolid monarch proposed to find, as he said, "a plaister for that sore;" but the speech was as hard as the nature of the unhappy king and the heart of his ruthless judge. Soon deserted by his own daughters, Mary and Anne, the wretched king may have learned at length to sympathize with Kiffin in some incompetent, insufficient fashion. "My own children have forsaken me," said plaintively the saddened but unrelenting tyrant.

The relation of the Quakers to the Baptists was in the age of the later Stuarts close, though not always friendly, and at times fiercely hostile. George Fox, their founder, is said to have had an uncle who was a Baptist. Many of his (Fox's) early associates had left the Baptists to join the new body. Tallack, in our own day, an English

Quaker, has written a volume of interest on this subject, but his book does by no means exhaust the topic. Barclay, in a posthumous volume just leaving the press, has traced the connection of the founder of his body with the Mennonites of Holland, our spiritual kindred in the Provinces. Bunyan eagerly, on the other side of the Atlantic, impugned these principles, as did Roger Williams on this shore; and the volumes of both need to be consulted in presenting the divergencies that widely separate us from them in our views of the authority of the written word, of the permanence of the ordinances, and of the witness and work of the Holy Ghost.

Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Baptist and Quaker bravely incurred severest persecution from the Crown and the dominant church in fidelity to their convictions. Charles II. had, before reaching England, in his Declaration of Breda, as it was called, pledged himself to measures of tolerance and gentleness. These engagements he chose to neglect, and a Parliament, rampant in its opposition to the Puritanism that had ruled, supported and enhanced the cruel breach of compact.

The full measure of guilty intolerance has not yet been, perhaps never can be at this late day, presented; but in pillories where sufferers like a Keach stood; in prisons where inmates like a Bunyan toiled, prayed, wrote, and preached, and where a Vavasor Powell and a De Laune pined, the work of God had still its currency, "a fire shut up" that was not yet extinct, though Court and Parliament and Cabinet hoped, if violence and fines and scorn and threats could do it, that there should be an end of

dissent, and Puritanism should go down into dishonored silence.

It was not to be. The press spoke what the pulpit might not. And to the honor of the Quakers it should be ever recorded that their meek, multitudinous, passive resistance to oppressive edicts finally discouraged and exhausted an intolerant Court. Quakerism helped to choke the prisons of England to repletion, and to drive jailers and judges into despair.

When James shifted his policy in the hope of building up by the sovereign power, dispensing with the persecuting laws, his claim to absolutism—such as his grandfather, James I., had affected and illegally claimed, but which Coke and Selden had resisted—and expected also, in the shadow of indulgence granted to numerous Non-conformists, to bring indulgence, and ultimately power and sovereignty, to the fewer Catholic sufferers, the Non-conformists generally discountenanced measures of relief thus brought about by treading down law and the power of the Parliament enacting law. They shrunk, most of them, also from the proffer of civil and municipal employment made them by the Court to entice their leading ministry to support the papal policy of the Crown. Bunyan was among such repudiators of court patronage and favor, when some of his Baptist brethren, less farsighted and less self-denying, accepted the bribe and sustained the insidious schemes of the monarch.

From Holland, the land so often of refuge to the persecuted Presbyterian of Scotland and the hunted Puritan and Baptist of England, was to come, in God's good prov-

idence, relief for English religion and English liberty. The Prince of Orange, William III., the son-in-law of James II., as decided a Protestant as was his wife's parent a bigoted Romanist, commanded and accompanied a fleet which brought the Revolution of 1688 and put a final period to the Stuart dynasty.

Now, in that very Holland whence Christian England thus received timely and effectually relief, God had, during this Stuart dynasty, and in earlier years than theirs, a home and shelter for large bodies of men, in their views of infant baptism sympathizing with us, but in their views of war and oaths approximating the Quakers. Among them were men of eminence for genius and for literary activity. The greatest poet of Holland, Joost van Vondel, whom the critics of that country put on the plane of rivalry with Milton and Shakespeare, was a Mennonite. But he joined that portion of the body sympathizing with the Remonstrants, or Arminians; and after a time, in his later years, he went over, like Dryden, his British contemporary, to the Romanist communion. The Mennonites, like Menno himself, seem to have regarded affusion as sufficient baptism. Martin Duncan, a Roman Catholic priest in Holland, writing against Menno, in his lifetime and whilst an imperial edict set a price on Menno's head, holds language intimating that such affusion was, in Menno's view, sufficient. But there were Anabaptists and Anabaptist martyrs in Holland before Menno himself had yet left the Roman communion. That some of these preferred and practised immersion, we infer from the fact that their persecutors, who delighted in fitting the

penalty, as they cruelly judged it, to the fault, put many of them to death by full immersion, swathing the sufferers in large sacks which confined arms and feet, and then huddling the sacks with their living contents into huge puncheons, where the victims were drowned. So the Swiss Anabaptists, some of them at least, immersed in rivers. This appears from the work *Sabbata* of Knertz, a contemporary Lutheran. The Dunkers, too, on our shores, who were driven from a Swiss or German source, are immersionists in their own fashion.

A small, but in its day a very distinguished, branch of the Mennonites, too, were on principle immersionists. These were the Collegiants, or Rhynsburgers. Now, amongst them, was Conrad van Beuningen, in his youth a teacher among them. He retained his principles, though devoting himself at the call of his country to political life as an ambassador. With the Oxenstierns of Sweden, and the Turennes of France, and the Stuarts of England, he was brought into personal relations. Louis XIV. had a dislike to him, from his influence and his strong Protestantism; but he was propitiated on the personal approach of the eminent diplomatist. It was said of him by his admiring countrymen, that he carried the keys of the Cabinets of all Europe with him. A Pædobaptist theologian and historian of his own country, wonders at and compassionates this great statesman, that he so devoted himself to the study of prophecy. For with all his political greatness, he was, like Napier of Scotland and Sir Isaac Newton of England, a reverent student of the pro-



phetic Scriptures. He reached an advanced age, but from unhappy investments he is said to have spent his last days in poverty.

In times later than these, in the following century, this same community of Holland immersionists received the accession of Wagenaar, one of the historians of Holland, whose work, in numerous volumes, is still consulted. The body has nearly ceased to exist. Some funds for orphans that it possessed are still applied by the other branch of the Mennonites to youths, who have the choice of baptism by the method of the Collegiants or that of the Mennonites.

Thus, in people so distinct in some periods of their history, and so closely allied at other eras, as the nations of Holland and Britain, it has been seen that God's free Bible, in the hands of a free church, has not been without its approximating effects in the judgments to which it has led its students.

Among the two bodies, however, Rationalism, to which we have before alluded, has alike written itself the waster and the overthrower. The older Mennonites of Holland have become greatly shrivelled in numbers, as compared with their ancestors; and some of their scholars, amongst others Halbertsma, a Holland scholar, personally known to Southey, and a Mennonite minister, have written, as not long since the Quakers of England in regard to a like diminution in their own body also did, to inquire into the causes of this loss of their old hold on the national heart.

The General Baptists of England—a body which in the



days of the Restoration had a scholar and pastor like Grantham, author of a folio volume on religious doctrine and ritual, and in the main evangelical—passed over after the days of Grantham to Arianism and Socinianism; and though having scholars among them like James Foster and Toulmin, their diminution was sure and irremediable. It was only as they had raised up among them men comparatively ignorant, but full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, like Dan Taylor and the late John G. Pike and Amos Sutton, that the work of disintegration was arrested. An open Bible and a free church contain the elements of success whilst men consult and invoke the Holy Spirit—not when they neglect and provoke and repel him.

It is in the character of a people like the English and like the Americans that the play of such influences is most distinctly visible. Give to a solitary reader—give to a community of religious worshippers—the Bible, but with the continual inculcation that his own reason is to such student and such assembly paramount as authority over every and any other spirit; let a people, however cultured, erudite, and keen-sighted, learn to proclaim the strength of their own wisdom, to dictate to the Most High the chapters and contents of his own oracles; every man becomes, as Coleridge expresses it—once himself infected with the error, but happily learning earnestly to deplore it—“every man becomes his own revelation.” “If the light that is in thee be darkness,” said the most gracious and the most wise of teachers, “how great is that darkness.”

Into such an error it was that the princely intellect of

Milton seems to have been beguiled and precipitated. He who in his early days as a schoolmaster had led his students to the small compend of Ames on *Theology*, thoroughly Puritan and evangelical, became apparently in his later days a student and proselyte of the Socinian works printed in Holland, and afterward gathered there into the large and bulky folios of the *Fratres Poloni*. Rejecting the full deity of our Lord, he yet held our views of baptism, though he seems to have regarded the use of flowing, living water as essential to the just administration of the ordinance. His third wife, who long survived him, returned after his death to her native place in Cheshire and joined the Baptist church there, the pastor of which preached her funeral sermon, which he also printed.

Macaulay made the remark, that England, in the days of the Stuarts, produced but two great works of creative genius; the one was the *Paradise Lost*, the other was the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is matter of honest exultation and of devout gratitude to God that Bunyan was, with his brilliant genius, thoroughly evangelical. As to Milton, we accept his attestation as a scholar to the Bible evidence for immersion as baptism and for the regenerate as its proper recipients; but with his aberrations of doctrine we have no sympathy more than with similar errors of Arian character in that great philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton, who yet so honored our denominational fidelity to the ordinances and church polity of the New Testament as to believe us, with his own favored and favorite Arians, one of the two witnesses described in the book of

the Apocalypse, loyal whilst Christendom wavered and swerved.

No force of language can be too strong to deplore any disposition that may be displayed to ignore or to supersede the indispensable energy of the Holy Ghost as necessary to the true life and the continuous growth of the Christian Church. The Christ who went up to heaven, by charge august as aught belonging to so vast and wide and far-descended kingdom must be—by charge emphatic and deliberate—commended the church—about to be seemingly widowed, when his bodily presence should be withdrawn from her—to the care and custody of the Paraclete. “He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine and show it unto you.” Pentecost was, as he said, in his solemn and final leavetaking, to precede the setting out of his apostles on their errand of evangelization to all the earth. And all the earth combined, apart from and in forgetfulness of that Paraclete, can only succeed in depraving the evangel and in cancelling the apostolic commission. Its colleges cannot supply his place. Its sciences, be they in their topic material or immaterial, cannot, under the conduct of any finite mind, however brilliant, acute, or persistent, affect to ignore him, the Original, the Infinite, the Divine Mind.

Pascal, one of the loftiest intellects of the race, ever gratefully acknowledged the justice and value of a lesson set him by his father, that the things of religion have an evidence of their own. The Divine Spirit speaking to

man's own spirit and conscience is such sufficient and is such ever-near evidence.

In the training of royal pupils, it was one of the weak indulgences of ancient times that a lad brought up with the young prince was made to bear vicarious punishment whenever the kingly nursling was disobedient or heedless or wilful. A favorite of the unhappy Charles I. was Sir George Murray, who had thus in the days of the nursery and the boyhood been, as it was called, "the whipping-boy" to Prince Charles, taking for his own palm or shoulders the punishment due to the recreant prince. In our own times we hear of men of science who summon up the august form of John Milton to serve as whipping-boy for the prophet Moses. But is the scandal saved or the popularity honestly cherished by resorting to such methods? If Moses be in fault, let Science with a firm fidelity, like that of the old Christian martyrs, bring Moses to the scourge. But let it be also remembered that, in the judgment of the Christian community, there is truth in the saying of the Judge, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

Cite Moses or cite Paul, and make the scourge fall on the beloved disciple John as well. But we are persuaded that, as it has been found true of ancient times, so it will be found in later ages also, the Author of the volume will put in, by his providence, an appearance, when the citation is served, on behalf of the scribe of his own edicts and the penman of the Oracles which the Unerring dictated and the Unslumbering guards.

In the days on which we have dwelt, Spain had little of the Bible, and France cared to have little. Instead of the ancient volume, came the canon and the missal, the index of prohibited books, and the lives and legends of the saints. Was it for the gain of the race and the enfranchisement of the land?

France, in later days, had comparatively abolished the Bible. Did the creed of the Savoyard vicar, as Rousseau eloquently indited it, and the great *Encyclopædia* of Diderot, amply supply the lack?

England and Holland in their best days grew great and kept their greatness by the Bible. Man needs God more than God needs man.

Each epoch of culture proclaims the truth. England had had in the days of the Lancaster kings the proffer of God's book by Wyckliffe and his Lollards. Her spurning, as a government, of the boon, redounded not to her freedom or order. In the days of Edward VI., she had the proffer renewed. The martyrs hailed it and the common people, but the nobles and the sovereign in the next disastrous reign spurned it. What was the wail of the broken-hearted Mary over the loss of Calais compared with her secret sorrow over a barren marriage and a loveless and truant husband and a disaffected people? When, in Elizabeth's time, the renewed proffer met with a more cordial appreciation, Spain felt it, and all Britain felt it, and all Europe knew of it. When, in the days of James I., Puritanism appreciated what the king and his flatterers did not, with these Puritans was the glory and the future of England's prosperity. When, in the days of Charles I.,

the conflict began, with whom was the manhood of the nation? And, in all after-times, how much of English liberty is traceable to the resuscitation, in the Revolution of 1688, of very much which had been undervalued in the Restoration? In that Restoration, the Reign of the Saints, as it had been scoffingly called, had been replaced by the Reign of the Harlots. For British freedom and honor, what would have been the auguries had the policy of Charles II. and James II. prevailed, and, pensioned by Louis XIV., they had forced on England the absolutism which he, the lord paramount, paying their pensions, had forced on France?

It was said, when referring to the signal forces significant of the epoch that we have been together considering, that in it three great principles were at strife, each contending for dominion over man's conscience. The one of these was the paramount authority of God's Book, a free Bible, open for all to consult, apart from priest, synod, or pontiff, and which every man, from the ruler on the throne to the beggar in his hovel, was alike bound to know, to heed, and to obey. The motto of this school, as the rule inaugurating all inquiry and the judgment closing all debate, was, "It is written." The saying of Chillingworth, "The Bible, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants," was the shape into which this principle of the paramount authority of Scripture would be cast by the Latitudinarian school, of which Chillingworth was an ornament. Our own churches, in that age as in a later, would regard the rule as more justly stated and as leading to safer results when it ran, "The Bible, as read



by the light of that Holy Spirit who gave it, whose aid it bids us implore, and whose influence it requires us to experience and to reproduce." Baptists would, therefore, condense the principle of religious hope and the law of religious life into somewhat other utterance. The proto-martyr Stephen witnessed of "the lively oracles." The disciples of Christ must be men divinely taught, personally regenerate, and then grafted by ordinances into churches. "A living spirit, consulted in the lively oracles, and radiated through living churches," would present the Paraclete, the Bible, and the Church, as the Baptists held them, all grouped together in the just relations of the Interpreter, the oracle, and the disciple.

In following out these views of Christian doctrine, our fathers confronted the pillory and the dungeon and the scaffold; but persecution neither extinguished their testimony nor exploded their influence. Against the great principle of the individual right to study the Bible, and to carry out, into independent church organization, its requirements as to Christian duty and brotherhood, there were men, many, zealous, and influential, whose appeal was to the examples of the Fathers and to sacred usages inherited from hoar antiquity. They relied on tradition and pleaded the authority of the collective church in her councils. They cited the Fathers, and dwelt on the stories of the saints, and argued for the recognition of a visible head and the decisive deliverances of a personal arbiter. But, sifted and analyzed, the record was often found of imperfect character and uncertain date. Gravest conclusions were built on "overdated rules," to use a

phrase of Milton's. The opinions and divergent traditions of men were made to hide and choke Scripture, just as the Saviour charged the Pharisees with bringing into discredit and oblivion the Scriptures of the prophets by intervening and baseless traditions of their own authorship. Father against Father, council against council, the inquirer was left in a maze of vague hagiology and hurtling canons. The essence of the doctrine of this school, closely analyzed, was found to be, when Sinai and Patmos had thundered, "It is written," that there arose a new queen, stately and imposing, but her credentials, when fully investigated, were found to be, "It is rumored." The Fathers say it there; the councils decree it thus; the pontiffs, by the ban and interdict, Index and Inquisition, have claimed to settle creed and rite finally and infallibly and inevitably; but history says, the pontiffs were not all good men, and contradicted each other, and perverted Scripture, and sacrificed true martyrs. And if many "winds of doctrine" come out of these many and colliding authorities, the wise inquirer must look elsewhere for the refuge of his soul than to any code whose vital principle proves to be at last the practices, the judgments and traditions and opinions, of men—"It is rumored." Man's sayings, however numerous, may not supersede, much less contradict, the handiwork of Jehovah as he sent, and his people and miracles endorsed, prophet, apostle, and evangelist.

The Stuarts of England under James I., the son of a Romanist mother, Mary Queen of Scots, intrigued for the alliance of Catholic Spain, then in colonies, armies, and

treasuries and territories, the leading power of Europe. In Charles I. they were united, by matrimonial alliance, with Catholic France, when the apostasy of Henry IV. from Protestantism had won him a throne; but his daughter Henrietta Maria was the evil counsellor of her husband, a kindly, irresolute, untruthful man, with whom his subjects could make no peace, because he had no sincerity. Charles II., reckless, despotic, though courteous, keen-sighted, and witty, was secretly a convert to Catholicism, a pensioner of Catholic France, and intriguing to subvert the religion and freedom of his British subjects. His brother James, of a more rugged and open nature, but bigoted and avowed in his attachment to Catholicism, took precipitate and arbitrary means for the introduction of despotism and the restoration of Catholicism, that forfeited for himself and for his dynasty the throne of Britain.

In withstanding the attempts of this family, conscious or unconscious, indirect or avowed, to resuscitate the sway of tradition and to extrude the authority of Scripture only, the patriots of Britain were called to strive through an entire century as against immense odds; but surely no man can say that the fall of the Stuart dynasty was other than a blessing for the cause of freedom and enlightenment, throughout their own dominions not only, but throughout Europe and the world.

And yet the two principles, Scripture and Tradition, were not the only winds of doctrine that blew over the nation and the age. There was in the minds of many potent leaders of opinion, not only those filling univer-

sity chairs or church pulpits, presiding on the bench of justice, or occupying seats at the cabinet, or swaying the debates of Parliament, but those found in studies and in libraries haunted by quiet, meditative scholars, a third great power. It was a philosophy that, with many a theologian even, shaped and colored his whole system of doctrine and determined his mode of expounding Scripture. It was his controlling philosophy. Bacon had given a new and wiser direction to the research and speculation of men; but since his time had arisen a Hobbes in England and a Spinoza in Holland, whose works are yet reproduced, and whose influence is far from being exhausted even on the minds of our own age. And the scholars of some of these men claimed for the reason of man a power to set aside and nullify the verities of Holy Writ. Analyzed to the last results, the philosophy would be found to rest on the opinions of some single strong mind, plausibly stated, perchance, and by a throng of eager disciples passionately sustained. Its ultimate essence would be "It is Thought." Arbitrary power in the court of the Stuarts cited the principles and paraded the maxims of Hobbes, and the wild Epicurean riot of profligate and shameless courtiers grew proud and defiant on the same mental sustenance. If an obsequious chaplain prescribed passive obedience as due from each subject evermore to the Crown, a bacchanal horde was eager to shout its implicit faith in the fashionable skepticism when a crowd of ambitious and venal converts were hurrying to proclaim implicit faith in conclaves and pontiffs. So the Christian thinkers of the times of the later Stuarts,

when maintaining ancestral liberties and primitive, scriptural doctrine, found themselves in conflict, direct and unavoidable, with absolutism, not merely in the state, but with absolutism in the Romanist Church and its priests, and with skepticism, now Deistic, now Atheistic, now Pantheistic, on the part of those who exaggerated the powers and prerogatives of human reason.

The men who stood by the strong rock, "It is written," and believed that heaven and earth might pass away sooner than one sentence thus inscribed by the Omniscient and the Unchangeable Mind of the One Maker, Redeemer, and Judge, had to watch against the outnumbering masses of the advocates of precedent, authority, and tradition, who cried, "It is rumored;" and, on the other hand, had to hold their position as against a less numerous, but not less hostile and less effective, host of foes, who exaggerated the powers of man's mind in the intent to disparage the claims of the Divine Mind, and who called, in the names of Hobbes and Spinoza, men to drop the Bible and hold the Saviour's claims in suspense until they had first obtained the assent and endorsement of man's fickle, fallible intellect. These worshippers of Reason had hurled, with what to themselves seemed a serene scorn, against the psalm of the Covenanter and the prayer of the Puritan and the text of Bible-loving, Bible-quoting churches, the dread intimation, "Such, ye bigots and devotees, is not the judgment of Spinoza, the utterance of Hobbes, 'It is thought.'"

What the Fathers did wisely, bravely, and well—what the Fathers held victoriously against vast odds, when the

Traditionists pealed, "It is rumored," when the Philosophers exclaimed, "It is thought," our spiritual ancestry replying with a calm burst, "It is written, and let God, thus writing, be true though every man be a liar"—is wise for us also, is a just saying and a brave for you and for me this day; and through the morrow, whatever changeful fashions that morrow may bring; and into the far eternity.



X.

JOHN BUNYAN.



## JOHN BUNYAN.

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It is a principle with which teachers of rhetoric have been wont to arm their pupils, and a caution also employed by instructors in biblical interpretation to warn the young exegete against carrying into minutest detail his explanation of parable or emblem, that "no metaphor can be expected to run on all fours." What might, from its likeness in some respects, be a just illustration, would yet, in other regards, fail to be a parallel, apt and adequate, for the truth which it was quoted to explain, and jar painfully or ludicrously on the disciple's mind. And this difficulty would be greatly enhanced if, besides touching at four, it should be held necessary that the symbol and the original tally at forty not only, but at four hundred, or even, it may be, at four thousand, points of contact and mutual resemblance. Yet such is the very essence of successful allegory. It demands that the approximations between the emblem and its original should be continuous and multitudinous; that, through a long-drawn narrative, and in the course, it may be, of a journey lasting for months and covering wide regions, there should be no grievous dissonance between the lesson to be taught and the story intended to embody and suggest that lesson.

Masters of imagination and of utterance have here failed signally. Dryden's *White Hind* is but grotesque when talking Tridentine theology. It is the vastness of the risk thus run, and the rare distinction of eminent success where failure is so easy and has been so general, that makes the felicity of Bunyan as an allegorist. Goldsmith's mind was, both in judgment and in compass, far inferior to that of his great friend Samuel Johnson. But he said, wisely and wittily, that had the great lexicographer undertaken to write fables like Æsop's, and the subject of the fable should be minnows, he would make his little fishes talk like huge whales. His ponderous character would break the spell of the natural. The late Prof. De Morgan, a man devoted to the exact sciences, and speaking in consequence with more precision of utterance than others, has said of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, "He is all but universally held to be the greatest master of allegory that ever wrote."\* So the *Westminster Review*, an authority with no leanings toward the author's school or theme, calls it "an allegory the most remarkable in the world."† Contrast either of his great books of this class, the *Pilgrim* or the *Holy War* of the Elstow tinker, with the *Faerie Queen*, the great poetical allegory of Spenser. You recognize in Spenser an imperial richness of fancy, and a melodious sweetness of rhythm, with which the Nonconformist artisan and preacher could not begin to cope. But what a sense of weariness soon steals over the admiring reader of the mellifluous and radiant page.

\* *Budget of Paradoxes*, London, 1872, p. 447.

† October, 1837, p. 118.

The writer has left his magnificent poem unfinished ; had it been completed by the author, the perusal would be left, we fear, incomplete by most who had begun to be its readers. The unnatural and the unreal breaks through all the gorgeousness of imagery and the delicious affluence of style. The queen, Elizabeth, and her antagonist, Mary Queen of Scots, who shine among Spenser's veiled personages, are far more glorious and impressive on the prose pages of Froude than under the poetic touches even of an Edmund Spenser. The true, the real, on the contrary, in Bunyan, crops out of the most bewitching narrative of the figurative and the emblematical. In the illiterate tinker's works there is recognized, by men competent to judge of the great questions of psychology and of theology there stated, a profound fitness under all the easy, rapid narrative of pilgrimage, siege, and battle-field. A scholar of our own country, Dr. Cheever, who has written what both in Britain and in our own land has been held the best commentary on the *Pilgrim*, has found, if we remember aright, only cause for admiration in the doctrine as well as in the style. Coleridge said of the *Progress*, that he believed it the most exact system of evangelical theology on Calvinistic principles that had ever been written. And this is the judgment, we must recollect, of a keen critic and ripe scholar widely read in various literatures, and a brilliant poet master himself of an imperial fancy. A venerable scholar of our own country, Prof. Tayler Lewis of Schenectady, deeply familiar with Scripture and intellectual philosophy, has said in an Old Testament commentary, "On these deeper aspects

of humanity, consult that most profound psychologist, John Bunyan, in his *Holy War*. . . . Bunyan was Bible-taught in these matters, and that is the reason why his knowledge of man goes so far beyond that of Locke or Kant or Cousin.\* Prof. Lewis calls it † “his greatest book,” ranking it, in depth of religious truth and insight, above the more popular *Pilgrim's Progress*. And that great theologian, Andrew Fuller, adjudged also to it the superiority over the other beautiful allegory of its author.

Yet the one of these books, so wondrous as philosophy and theology, children read for its fascination. Southey declared that his own children read it for the story. The young Charlotte Brontë, in later years so celebrated for her portraiture of character, when she was a mere child strayed from home to find the wondrous land that Bunyan's pages describe. Gerald Massey, the poet, when a lad, in much forlorn poverty, records in what circumstances he learned to prize the immortal dreamer. Holcroft, an infidel through most of his days, and known chiefly as a dramatic author, furnishing many plays for the stage, declared “it to be the most exquisite book in the English language that he had ever read.” So have men entirely opposed to its religious teachings owned the witchery of the narrative. Semler, the father, as some style him, of German Rationalism, speaks of his having read it; and Priestly, of the impression which its images of the cave of Despair made on his youthful mind. Wyttenbach, the great classical scholar, Swiss by birth, but Hollander by adoption, describes the great

\* *Lange's Genesis*, N. Y., 1868, p. 286.

† *Ibid.*, p. 647.



power it swayed over his youthful soul, to the dislike of his father. So Theodore Parker speaks of its "grand fabling." Rufus Choate, the rival of Webster, and one of the most eloquent of the advocates of the New England bar, held the speech of Mr. Standfast at the river "the most mellifluous and eloquent talk that was ever put together in the English language." Choate himself was a most eloquent talker, with a right, therefore, to be heard as to force and grace of speech. Buckle, in his youth, feasted on *it*, with Shakespeare and the *Arabian Nights*, to become in after-life a Positivist. Kingsley says of this book, "It will live as long as man is man."

Now, the book that thus extorts from childhood and barbarianism their sympathies, and yet satisfies the profound needs of thinkers and scholars like some that we have quoted, must have had a wondrous history. It presents what to some might seem of necessity the repulsive theme of Christian experience; but it has the vivid action of the drama and the grand march of the epic, along with the picturesque simplicity of the nursery-tale. There is the power of rare personal genius, but there is also the informing force of scriptural truth and of light from eternity, and all these are ablaze with the Spirit's divine energies. There was a time when it was undervalued as a rude book. A good man of the name of Gilpin, a scholar and a Christian, a clergyman of the English Establishment when its pulpit had much less than now of the gospel, many years ago rewrote the *Pilgrim*, hoping to render it more elegant. The Rev. Charles Neale, a Low Churchman, gave a copy of it as his dying present to his

son, then a lad of but five years, who became the Rev. John Mason Neale, a High Churchman, a Ritualist, the author of some beautiful hymns, but who undertook to recast the *Progress* with more of the Ritualistic element interfused into its structure, and in consequence incurred the indignant censure and remonstrance of Macaulay, not soon to be forgotten. Others have translated it into blank verse. There have been three or four attempts to render it into English rhyme. And yet of its own original English prose, as the brazier's hand first wrote it down, Southey—no feeble writer himself—has spoken most highly. Macaulay, a yet higher master of English, has eulogized it most earnestly as a treasury of true English.

It was an evidence of the ripe wisdom and the rare, fine taste of Bunyan that, familiar as his youthful campaigning had made him with the musket and larger artillery of modern warfare, he clung in his allegory to the sword, shield, dart, and helmet of ancient battle-fields. It kept his story more in unison with the imagery of Scripture, as also with the romances of ancient chivalry, so dear to the youthful fancy and recurrent in the popular ballad. And by preserving in his more popular allegory of the *Pilgrim* the form and details of Biography, rather than the wider field and larger groupings of History, he brought it more closely home to the individual heart, as a manual for the closet and a burnished mirror for the conscience. Scholars in metaphysical and theological lore may prize the nicer psychology of the *Holy War*, but the *Pilgrim* wins more easily and holds more firmly the affections of the lone, simple reader, of the sad

heart "knowing its own bitterness," as of that same heart again when gladdened by "the joy wherewith the stranger intermeddleth not."

The lot of Bunyan was cast in an age of great changes, dire perils, and heroic men. His father, a tinker, brought the boy up in his own trade, yet gave him some schooling, which the lad seems greatly to have neglected and to have almost totally lost.

Profane and rude, he was perhaps a roysterer, as the age called it, rather than a vicious lad. James and Charles I. had both, by the *Book of Sports*, fostered certain games as fit recreations on the Lord's Day. In bell-ringing, Bunyan delighted extravagantly, as once did Hale, who afterward crossed Bunyan's path in later years so strangely. At seventeen he drifted into the army, whether that of the king or of the Parliament is to this day a matter of debate among his biographers. We rather think the probabilities that he was on the king's side are the greater from various considerations. His profane habits would have been in keeping with the known practices of the Cavaliers, but would have been strongly and effectually put down in the Parliamentary forces. Such ignorance of gospel doctrine as he showed in the days of his first seriousness he could scarce have had under the teachings of Parliamentary chaplains and in the society of Parliamentary soldiers, many of them exhorters themselves, earnest and devout men. Had his place been in the army on the people's side, the successes won by that army at Naseby would have fixed him still in the ranks; whereas the defeat of the royal forces there and elsewhere in that

same year would soon disperse the recruits but recently enlisted and loosely attached to the king's banners; and in some such way only does Bunyan's speedy return to civil life seem explicable. Another collateral circumstance, pointing in the same direction, is his joining the church of Gifford. The church which he first attended when deeply impressed, and which he ultimately joined, had as its pastor Gifford, who had been an officer in the royal forces, then a profane and wicked man, but afterward converted and become eminently pious. Now, the mere fact of having both been in the king's army would seem a very natural explanation of their drifting together into the same ecclesiastical community. At the siege of Leicester—a period when Charles was writing that his affairs looked more hopeful than they had long done—Bunyan was to have occupied a sentinel's place. From some delay another was sent in his stead, who was shot dead at his post. Bunyan always afterward regarded this as a special deliverance of God's good providence that he had been prevented occupying that post. Drifted back, if our conjecture be just, by the defeat of his cause and commander, to civil life, Bunyan was in his old haunts a violent and profane swearer; but it scarcely seems he was, either as libertine or tippler, what would now be regarded as thoroughly vicious. But his fluent and fierce cursing provoked the censure of a neighboring woman, herself lightly regarded; and the sharp check of those rude lips smote his heart. Early married to a young woman, the daughter, and probably the orphan daughter, of a pious father, she brought to her young husband but the dowry of two

pious books, Dent's *Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and Bayley's *Practice of Piety*. The author of the last was a Welsh bishop, whose little book, translated into several languages, had great currency. He had read also in early or later years the *Life of Francis Spira*, Luther's *Exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians*, the *Sermons* of Bishop Andrewes, and Foxe's *Martyrs*.

His conscience seems to have been disturbed; and his overhearing the conversation of some poor pious women, who described their own religious experience, aroused in him a sense of his wanting entirely that inner religious life of which they testified. As he searched and read and prayed, his feelings became those of intensest anxiety, and often of overwhelming despair. The scenes of the Slough of Despond, the beetling sides of Sinai, the gloom of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the terrible speculations leading on to the cavern-dungeons of Giant Despair,—all are but reverberations of his own personal story. The viscid slime of the morass had hampered his steps; the chill gloom of the prison-house and its rusty iron had entered into his soul.

God brought him through to the light and peace of the gospel in a sense of the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ. The doctrine of Luther and Calvin, of Augustine before them, and Jansenius and Arnauld and Pascal after them, became the substantial outline of his own view of the way in which God's grace meets the sinner. Encouraged by his fellow-Christians, he became a laborer for Christ, and soon an exhorter, and finally a preacher. But there were periods even under Cromwell's rule when



the Presbyterian influence would hamper the preaching of the Baptists, and Bunyan was thus molested before the Restoration. But when the Restoration brought a reckless and proscriptive prelacy into many dioceses, Bunyan fell soon under the notice of the authorities. Wingate and Kelyng, names that yet survive in the legal literature of Britain, were—one as clerk of the court, and the other as judge—among those who harried and threatened our worthy tinker.

But he had counted the cost, and was ready to face the result. That he did not attend the State-Church; that he would not use the prayer-book, when he believed in the grace and duty of imploring the Spirit's aid in voluntary prayer,—were offences not to be remitted to one so zealous, so popular, and so constantly itinerant. The loss of friends and home, and the means of providing sustenance for his wife and four children, one of them blind, who lay especially near a fond parent's heart,—all were considerations to have made many men pause. But Bunyan was Steadfast and Valiant-for-the-Truth and Great-Heart all in one. He went to the prison, in which, for the greater part of twelve and a half years, he was detained. The jail sometimes thronged with prisoners; Bunyan preached to his fellows there; learned to make thread-lace for the bread of his household when his brazier-work had been cut off by prison-walls; studied his Bible and his Foxe's *Martyrs*; and the men of whom this old martyrologist told had in this simple Baptist one ready to share like sacrifices. For sometimes he was threatened with banishment; and at others, even with hanging. But he found favor in the



eyes of his jailer, and sometimes in disguise visited his family and resumed his preaching. At times he was disguised, it is said, as a ploughman, in the frock of the employment and with wagoner's whip in his hand, but everywhere and in all events and perils, he was Christ's true witness, retaining his people's hearts and sustained by their prayers.

An appeal was brought by his wife, a second, whom he had married on losing the first, the mother of his children; and the excellent Sir Matthew Hale, when approached with the request, showed himself the serious, kindly, and upright magistrate he always proved himself. The friend of Baxter, who was also a Nonconformist, Hale could not be at least the enemy of one whom yet, indeed, he had not by his works known. He counselled a personal application to the king. But that in these days to the poor in the provinces would seem a sheer impossibility. The policy of the Court changed. Seeking in secret a restoration of Romanism, both Charles and James II. would have favored the Romish Church, and to that intent would have relaxed the laws against the Nonconformist portion of the Protestants. But the High Church were in that day ruthless and proscriptive beyond even the days of Laud. The Quaker element had obtained the ear of the Court through the influence of one of their members on Charles II., whom, when a fugitive prince fleeing from the rising star of the Commonwealth and Cromwell, this Quaker, then a sailor, had aided in his escape to France. Their Quaker brethren clogged the prisons along with the Nonconformists.

Bishop Barlow was said in earlier narratives to have interfered, but the later accounts represent this Quaker influence as having been almost the sole power in opening the prison-doors to a large number; and Bunyan was among them.

His zeal and activity had acquired for him already the name of Bishop Bunyan. His preaching at his own church and its various out-stations; his books, small and great, which he sent out with the utmost rapidity; his popular eloquence; his visits to London, where he always attracted a crowd, even if the service were in the early morning,—had made him a name and a power. Owen, the greatest of the Congregationalists, is said, with all his erudition and his mastery of the Scriptures, to have recognized the genius and pulpit power of Bunyan, and to have given ready and generous acknowledgment of it.

His books show Bunyan to have read human character rapidly and keenly. Some of his portraitures in the *Progress* and in the *Holy War* are—both as kindly sketches of Christian excellence, or as a vivid outline of the persecutor, the whiffler, the pickthank, and the prater—of a force and neatness which Swift would have made coarser, but could not have made stronger, and which Rochefoucault or La Bruyère could scarcely have made more graceful or have rendered more delicate. Strong in the Bible, and in the knowledge of his own heart, and in the story of his various flock, all his books display one in whom wit and wisdom and devotion greatly shone. One cannot but imagine what his feelings would have been had he crossed the path of some of his eminent con-

temporaries, also Christian—of good Bishop Ken, or of Izaak Walton, or of Jeremy Taylor, or of Archbishop Ussher, or of the saintly Archbishop Leighton.

An Episcopal poet and bishop of our own country has expressed the regret that some good bishop did not find him, take Bunyan home, and make a deacon of him. The proposal, we judge, was not as practicable, had it been tried, as it may to some now seem. Bunyan was rooted in the conviction that acceptable worship should be free and spiritual, and without the forms of a printed book. His Calvinism was decided at a day when the leading prelates of the church were going over from the Calvinism of the Reformation and the Elizabethan times to the Arminian and Latitudinarian platform. Fowler, the author of *The Way of Salvation*—a book which Bishop Watson, many years after, reprinted in his *Theological Tracts* with much praise—in that very book had taken ground which Bunyan held fatal to the gospel and denounced in that light. The controversy was bitter; and Fowler, diocesan as he afterward became, acquired little honor in his conflict with the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. But God had in his servant already accomplished much; and if appearances do not greatly misguide, the results hereafter to be accomplished are even yet greater than the rich gatherings of the past. In a mission of mercy, riding to reconcile a father to his disobedient but penitent son, Bunyan contracted a fever, lay sick at the house of a friend, a Congregationalist deacon, in London, and there died. Interred in Bunhill Fields, his grave has been since a place of growing interest, attracting its numerous

visitants. The monument, more than once repaired, has become lately graced with a recumbent statue. The late Lord Chancellor Campbell, himself the son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister, in his *Lives of the Lord Chief-Justices*,\* has spoken—perhaps too warmly—of Bunyan as one who accomplished more by his works for the cause of religion than all the prelates of the Established Church. Each man has his own gift. Chalmers once said that all the revenue of the see of Durham—and it was once among the richest of the English bishoprics—ever paid, century after century, to its successive incumbents, did not overpay the worth to religion of Joseph Butler's great book, *The Analogy of Religion*. And it is a volume of great and imperishable power for thinkers of a certain class. But the *Pilgrim's Progress* of Bunyan was written for a wider circle, and with a brighter, if not a keener, genius. The writings, too, of Beveridge and Andrewes and Ken and Reynolds, and of men in the church who never wore mitres, like Perkins, Sibbes, Preston, and others, are of high and enduring value.

But God called his more honored servant to show that

\* *Ld. Ch. Campbell, Lives of Lord Chief-Justices*, 3d ed., Lond., 1874, vol. ii., p. 213: "Inspired by him who touched Elijah's [Isaiah's] hallowed lips with fire, he [B.] composed the noblest of allegories, the merit of which was first discovered by the lowly, but which is now lauded by the most refined critics, and which has done more to awaken piety and to enforce the precepts of Christian morality than all the sermons that have been published by all the prelates of the Anglican Church." It is language of singular emphasis, as coming from one who, as occupant of the woolsack, had himself sat with the wearers of mitres in the British House of Lords.

"chill penury," which, as Gray tells, has in so many a lofty soul "repressed the noble rage" of genius, need not be found an insuperable barrier; that instead of clog, it may be to Christian faith and Christian love a spur. The tinker, with no university laurels on his sturdy brow, has moved calmly to take his place among the celebrities of English literature, and the literature of the British Islands has proved too narrow for the range of the widened influence which God meant to bestow upon him.

Sir Walter Scott took unhappy and misjudging measure of the Covenanters of his own region and of the Puritans of England; but to Bunyan he has not been unjust, as to the preacher's brother-Baptist, Harrison.

The other and later critics have seemingly united to allow to this man of the peasantry and the workshop the honors of a prose Dante come back from the Eternal World as with its clinging, dazzling splendors.

Even in his lifetime our author complained of the counterfeiters that attached his name to their own wares. The Third Part, as it is called, of the *Progress* is of this unworthy class. Some Scottish professors of eminence in science, Thomson and Tait, attached as a motto in its first edition to a recent pamphlet of their own a citation from this forged Third Part, as if believing its genuineness. In its theology, as in its cumbrous style, it is wholly unlike Bunyan; and it introduces in one of its characters Suicide—a melancholy theme, and, to modern society, one of growing interest; and the regret is excited that Bunyan did not himself treat this dark topic in his own sinewy Saxon and with his grand force and breadth of fancy, and



with his hold alike on the people's heart and on the people's Bible.

Art has, in later days, never wearied in its endeavor to reproduce the characters to which Bunyan's pen first gave life. An intense Realism is the peculiar distinction of his genius. As Defoe gave to the creations of his fancy the aspect of London tradesmen and of Wapping sailors, so Bunyan, with the fidelity of a Dutch painter, reproduced character, feature, and bearing—not as an Italian master would assay to do, idealizing and etherealizing, and so evaporating them, but in the garb of his own day, and with the distinct, minute, patient limnings, and the clear, varied, and exact hues, of the particolored humanity he saw moving around him. His *Vanity Fair* had lived in the generation before, as it was living in the generation around him; and it will live again long as Vanity whirls men out of the ruts of Duty into the clouds of an idle Fancy and into the sloughs of miry Passion.

Yet, with all this accuracy, there was the freedom of Nature, the many-sided; and the picturesque play of Life, the many-mooded and the many-hued. But not too low for pity and tears, not too high for prayers and duties. Humanity with Bunyan was not the being that Milton in his later days fancied, that Rousseau in his elaborate and eloquent sketches exalted; but it was Humanity with the image of Eden not all erased, with the fetters of Sin continually dragged at the ankles till the feet were planted in the ways of Christ's obedience, and the neck grew strong, erect, and stubborn in the clasp of Christ's enamelling, enfranchising holiness—a penitent, religious manhood,



mindful of the Fall, but wistful of the New Jerusalem, and with eyes bent to the welcoming Father and the waiting Heavens. Such a man could not be permanently wretched, nor could he be effectually proscribed and crushed.

Such a Puritanism planted our own New England. But it was not perfect, because it arrogated a perfection which it did not possess, and denied room to men like Bunyan and like Roger Williams, except as they were meek and submissive and conformed to its behests. Robinson had bidden his brethren, when quitting Europe for America, to look out for further light yet to break out of God's word and providence. Against some of that light they bolted wicket and closed window. That light so breaks out—not in a Rationalism, self-confident, arrogant, and superficial, which blots Revelation and outruns the Christ. The true light came evermore from him who was anciently, who remains at this moment, and will abide to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, the one Light of the world.

To this Light, Luther looked, as did Augustine before him. To him Pascal looked, and Bunyan. And at his feet is the lesson of the day and the hope of the race. From him comes the destiny of our own and all worlds; and it was part of his goodness to have opened the pilgrimage from Destruction to Glory, and to have given Bunyan the heart to portray for us and for himself the way thither.

It is matter of astonishment that out of scenes, to the hurried and scornful glance of man, most unpromising,

God often summons influences of unexpected potency, and which, instead of soon spending themselves, seem destined to win new allies, and take on fresh territories for their domain, as man and society move on. When Bunyan was remanded to his prison—the “den,” as even the patient Christian confessor might well term it—his enemies might seem justified when scouting the presumptuousness of the poor “sectaries” in hoping for any remedy where wealth and power and courtly influence and spiritual despotism all hurled back the plea of the poor wife, interceding for Bunyan’s hearing and release. But out of the repulse was bred no despair; and when Bunyan’s great allegories appeared, schemed and in part begun in that den, men might begin to see the faithfulness and beneficence of Providence in the incarceration that trained the writer; and might learn how much the soul that clasped God’s promise and covenant could rise superior to the party and cabinet and Parliament which at the time condemned it; and comprehend how such a soul, so schooled, could build up an influence to outlive the Stuart dynasty, and to spread beyond the bounds of the British empire. And the chief distinction of the town of Bedford and neighborhood is now, not the ducal home and library and park of Woburn Abbey, so long tenanted by the noble family of the Russells; but yet more, that Bedford prison was so long the home of a genius now world-wide in renown. And as if God would not let the blessed memory of his faithful servitor pass on, limited but to one single channel, his wisdom brought to that same prison the sympathies and conscientious regard of

John Howard. Residing near and made sheriff of that county, he accepted the trust, and began to measure and gauge its extent by ascertaining the discomforts and snares, the physical and the moral contaminations, and wretchedness and sufferings, of such abodes. And thus began that career which Burke in the imperial Parliament so eloquently portrayed and eulogized, and which, having traversed the British Isles, passed on so heroically, patiently, and persistently, to the scenes of similar endurance on the European Continent. In doing this, Howard was urged by the same gospel which had been the great motive-power of Bunyan. Though Bunyan was himself a Baptist, the church he had long guided and fed passed to the charge of Pædobaptist pastors. One of these, a Pædobaptist, becoming on examination a convert to our views of the ordinance, was baptized by immersion; and retained his pulpit and charge whilst Howard was resident there. Baptist as Simonds was, Howard was one of his regular hearers; and one of the last letters written by the philanthropist abroad to those having charge of his Bedford affairs contained instructions for the payment of his annual contribution to the Baptist pastor's salary. At London, Howard was the habitual hearer of another and more distinguished Baptist pastor, Dr. Stennett; and before going abroad on his tour of mercy, he wrote to Dr. Stennett, saying, that the written memorials of sermons which he had heard from his lips were among his choice spiritual consolations in his journeyings and his isolations on the Lord's Day. It is not certain that Howard was himself a full convert to the views of Simonds and

Stennett; but it is thus seen how through a Baptist's old prison and Baptist pulpits went down, as from dungeon and from desk, their shares of force to the impulse that made Howard the admiration and the blessing of so many in lands so remote.

The honors of a statue and memorial, which in his lifetime Howard so passionately rejected, were conferred on him after his death; and, in spite of his protest, the figure shaped by another Christian, the sculptor Bacon, was reared at St. Paul's Cathedral, London. Admiration of that statue and of the career of philanthropy which it honored, moved the soul of Andrew Reed, when a mere lad led thither by his mother; and out of it, when a minister, came Reed's establishment of four large institutions of benevolence in and near the British capital. More recently a bronze statue has been reared in Bedford to Bunyan, the gift of the Duke of Bedford; and at a yet nearer day the same nobleman has given bronze gates, adorned with memorial scenes from the *Progress*, to the enclosure of the chapel occupied by the church of which in former times Bunyan was the pastor. When the Bunyan statue was erected, it was announced that the first book given, in his childhood, to the duke thus bestowing the memorial of their eminent townsman on the town of Bedford, had been a copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim*, presented to the young child by his mother, and that mother an intimate friend of Mrs. Carlyle, the wife of the historian of the French Revolution. Dean Stanley, chaplain to Queen Victoria, officiated at the services of the presentation of the Bunyan memorial. It was there mentioned, that the present

sovereign, now a grandmother, when the eldest son of the Prince of Wales received infant baptism, gave, as sponsor to her grandchild, a silver statuette of the late Prince Albert, her husband—that husband so cherished and so lamented—in the pilgrim garb of Christian, the way-faring man of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Were John in the body again revisiting the earth, he might have his own thoughts as to the infant aspersion; but it would in his loyal eyes be a pleasant token of the Christian sorrow of the widowed queen, that she remembered, and would have her grandchild remember, in his religious principles and character, the husband so loved and deplored. And that ingenious dreamer—who, in delicate allusion to the reigning profligates of his own time, the age of the Stuarts, had said, it would be pleasant “if the tops of the mountains could be seen cleared of the deluge” of abounding and overruling iniquity—might well join the widowed sovereign in the hope, for her son and for her son's son, that their eminence might become an exaltation above folly, a refuge for truth and for holiness, even if holiness and truth should unhappily be deserted and submerged all about them.

To crave posthumous fame is pronounced by some an utter vanity. But, vain or not, Bunyan has received it, and is continually amassing it in yet increasing measure. But posthumous usefulness is certainly a boon to be eagerly sought and to be passionately cherished, if we believe the text, that the righteous dead, resting from their labors, have yet their works following them. In how many languages which Bunyan could not under-



stand is his *Pilgrim* now pronouncing the old gospel. When that martyrdom which raged in the island of Madagascar—during the reign of a former queen, a fanatical persecutor—was at its height, the Christian converts had already, in their dispersion or in their dungeons, manuscript copies of a version of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and the martyrs cheered each other in approaching the final tortures and sacrifice by citing passages of this book, Western in its origin, but biblical in its structure and spirit; and thus, like the Bible from which it is drawn, meeting their case and going to the heart's depths in the hour of earth's last agonies.

The work goes on; and from another side of the same great African continent comes a like attestation. Dr. Robb, a missionary of the United Presbyterians of Scotland, labored long at Old Calabar, in Western Africa. An accomplished scholar, for seventeen years he toiled on this dismal and pestilential coast. From the original Hebrew he translated the Old Testament into the Efik tongue. Weakened by successive attacks of fever of growing violence, he has returned to Scotland, but he has first translated into the Efik tongue Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.\* Sarkis, an Armenian, translating Bunyan's *Pilgrim* into his Asiatic dialect, rejoiced, when dying, at the thought that he should go to see Bunyan himself, the writer of that book, in heaven. Would the exultation be only on the side of the convert, and not of the long-glorified believer as well? Joseph Wolff distributed copies of it in Arabic in the territories of Arabia

\* *Am. Bible Soc. Record*, N. Y., Aug. 17, 1876, vol. xxi. p. 124.



itself, perhaps in regions over which Job had wearily tramped, or which had been traversed by his pious but aged friends, the sheiks Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad, as they came to proffer their friend the bootless consolation that soon became goading to its patient. It has been given in Hebrew at the gates of modern Jerusalem; and if pondered by its takers, we think it likely to be more cause of gratulation than most of the material relics that travellers bring from those memorable scenes. In French, in German, in Danish, in Hungarian, in modern Greek, in Malagasy, Bengalee, Hindu, Urdu, Tamil, Canarese, Teloogoo, Malayalin, Mahratta, Samoan, Tahitian, Burmese, Karen, and dialects it would be wearisome to add; in fact, in more tongues than are enumerated as spoken, in the day of Pentecost to the Jews at Jerusalem, God's providence has caused this wondrous volume to be rendered.

The attempt has been frequently, but never successfully, made to show Bunyan indebted for suggestions in his work to earlier or contemporary authors. The honest protest he makes in the matter is evidence sufficient, intrinsically, of its perfect originality. The late George Offer has devoted what to some will seem weariness of exhausting comment and analysis, upon the various books that have been presented as models or exemplars. The evidence of collation is, we think, overwhelming that Bunyan was no plagiarist. Bishop Patrick's *Pilgrim*, to the few who read it, gives sufficient manifestation that, whatever the personal worth and scholarly training of the good prelate, the contemporary of the Elstow tinker,

yet he was, as a master of English and of allegory, entirely incompetent to stand beside the Nonconformist genius.

So various writers have essayed to rival, in the same and in new paths of allegorical fancy, the career and power of John Bunyan. A volume of interest might be compiled on these British and American disciples; but we believe the voice of criticism is unanimous in its prompt deliverance, that the mantle of the Bedford worthy has not, in his Elijah flight to fame and blessed and world-wide usefulness, fallen on these admiring Elishas. Some of the later books are ingenious and able, and not without their own interest and attractiveness; but they are not of his spiritual kith and lineage. Hawthorne's *Celestial Railroad* is one of the happiest; yet it is a grim, satirical episode, so to speak, of a part of the great epic of the *Progress*; and shows Abaddon at his old and too successful stratagems, without that burst of celestial glory which so irradiates the First Part of Bunyan's allegory. For the beauty of these sketches we find a voucher in the lectures on the advantages of ecclesiastical history, delivered by Dean Stanley to the graduates of an English university in which he was professor,—that old University of Oxford, which once scouted Methodism and dissent so haughtily. Stanley, the friend and disciple and admirer of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, imbued in classical memories, yet thought sentences of Bunyan, tinker as was the inditer, no unfit opening and no unmeet close of his classical pages. He begins the first of these introductory lectures with a screed from the House Beau-

tiful and its galleries shown to pilgrims; and rounds up the end of his third lecture with a vista as seen from the leads of the House Beautiful looking toward the Delectable Mountains of Immanuel's Land and of the Celestial City, a city and land from those Delectable Mountains to be yet more nearly and clearly discerned.

Bunyan has been a great teacher, a polyglot teacher in many dialects; and nations are gathering to his feet. In his lessons, the substance is of the old unworn, untorn gospel: and the blessing of the King has never ceased to fall, fresh and fast, on the readers of the graphic, witching record. Those readers include all ages of life, all grades of culture, the grave philosopher, the wary theologian, the nursery-child, and the aged disciple, bowed and infirm, who hears already the rush of the Dark River, and looks hourly for the Master's summons to rise and cross.



XI.

BAPTISTS AND MISSIONS.

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## BAPTISTS AND MISSIONS.

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PAUL had laid him down to rest on the shores of Asia, upon the edge of the Ægean Sea, and confronting the coasts of Europe. It is in Troas. All around float memories of Homer, and of the war that, along those beaches and waters, the hosts and fleets of Greece had waged against Asiatic Troy. Between the two coasts, European and Asiatic, lies the island of Samothrace, with its towering mountain, about five thousand feet in height, looking down upon those fields where now Paul slumbered, and where once Achilles fought and Hector fell. But classic bards and legends have lost their interest for the man whom, smitten down on his way to Damascus, the Christ has transmuted from a persecutor to an apostle. In the visions of the night, a man of Greek origin stands before him, and as a hapless seaman from the side of a sinking wreck might, through night-gusts and driving rain, shout for aid, ere it should be too late, he cries, "Come over and help us." It is a cry of need from a son of Japheth to this consecrated son of Shem. But it is not a Greek of the old Achæan race; it is not a scholarly man wearing the white robe of the Porch or of the Academe from Athens; or a stalwart son of Sparta, grim and rude. He is a man of Macedonia, that part of

Greece which had been emerging the latest into fame, and which then had been distinguished for bravery rather than intelligence. To the rest of the Greek people the Macedonians were much like what the stalwart, brawny Highlander from his moors and mists would be, compared to the rest of the British people—the manufacturers of Glasgow, or the students of Edinburgh, or the ship-builders of the Clyde, or the men who had banks and warehouses and docks in London. Under Alexander, this portion of the Grecian race—these Greek Highlanders—had hurled themselves into Asia; and its old dynasties and populous cities had gone down before the Macedonian phalanx, as the house of cards in some nursery goes down before the swoop of the child's arm. Babylon, Persia, India, had heard the wondrous story of that invasion, and kept yet the memorials of its rapid and irresistible successes. The footprints of that tramping host were on all their proudest and oldest glories. What has a conquering host, like that which Alexander led, to do with distrust or need? Is the mailed warrior to play the mendicant? Need forgets all ranks. When a ship goes down, the prince may be glad to touch the tarry jacket of the cabin-boy. It is ever so; for secular honors and advantages may consist with deepest spiritual abasement and destitution. Not twenty years have gone by since the reputed son of a carpenter rose from a borrowed tomb, under the walls of Jerusalem, to vindicate his right to be hailed the Light, Redeemer, and Judge of the world; and had, according to pledge, sent out his Pentecostal Spirit, having before selected his apos-

tles and given them charge to evangelize all nations, Gentile and Jew alike. Paul is of that Hebrew stock; has seen by special revelation that Hebrew Messiah; has become an apostle, "born out of due time;" has preached to his countrymen, the Jews, and to the Asiatic Gentiles as well; and now Europe sends her appeal in behalf of her teeming Gentile population also. By her stoutest soldiers she lifts the imploring wail for relief.

If arts could save, Greece had a right to expect salvation. If arms could save, the Macedonian, above all other Greeks, might well arrogate a clear hope of salvation. But neither arts nor arms; neither Athenian philosophies nor Achæan traditions; neither monuments nor libraries,—could bring peace for the burdened conscience, or light for the soul that craves and yearns to know God. It was a voice out of the thick darkness hurling itself toward the morning light. It was the hoarse shouting of ignorance and guilt and hopeless sorrow—a need that demands help, large, prompt, and effectual—a peril that, on the edge of the reef and under the white breakers, called, trumpet-loud, for the life-boat to be manned and launched.

It is Europe demanding that Christian Asia should send its missionary activities thitherward. Paul gathers that the Holy Ghost, which had for the time obstructed their further labors in Asia, summoned them over the sea to Europe. He goes. Nor is his interpretation of the call unwarranted. The Holy Ghost sets before the Christian teachers an open door, and this spiritual Alexander has troops of willing captives to the new faith. In Thessalonica, a Macedonian city, he wins by God's blessing

numerous converts; and when, in a year or two, he has passed to another part of Greece, and turns to address his Christian converts in Thessalonica—a church not then two years old—to them he writes from Corinth his letters, which form probably the earliest of all the leaves of the New Testament. Certainly, nothing but the Gospel of Matthew can claim to be as old; and the date of Matthew's composition varies uncertainly from A. D. 50 to A. D. 60, and has no fixed period; but the letters to the Thessalonians were written in A. D. 51 or 52, according to the most recent chronologists. The vision in Troas had been the precursor of most glorious triumphs. In holy gratitude, the apostle exults\* over those who received the word “in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost. . . . For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad.” In none of his harvest-fields does the great apostle of the Gentiles seem to find as much unmingled cause of content as in these first-fruits of Europe, gathered after his missionary voyage from Asia. And in his letter to the Roman Christians† he speaks of the prompt sense of obligation awakened in these European converts toward their Asiatic evangelizers. “It hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them, verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.” If a Christ, born in the tents of

\* 1 Thess. i. 5, 7, 8.

† Romans xv. 26, 27.

Shem, has, by apostles bred in the lore and schools of Shem, been brought to these children of Japheth, the proselyted mission-field might well, in the sense of fraternity and of equity, send back greetings and help toward the proselyting camp of evangelists and apostles on those sacred fields of Palestine.

The very first sheets—earliest in the date of their writing—of this entire New Testament are the story of missionary adventure, launching from one continent to evangelize another. They tell how Asia was quitted for Europe by primitive zeal, and how emphatically the European converts recognized the new brotherhood thus created, and that in their common Ransomer they, the kindred of Alexander's old legions, owned themselves the debtors to men of Palestine, the soil whose acres Christ had trod, and whose people had brought them this wondrous light of salvation.

If the Christian church in our day would forswear foreign missions as redundant, you will see how she must, in consistency, tear asunder the volume of the New Testament right through its very heart, rending the Book of Acts out of the New Testament histories, and shearing off the Epistles to the Thessalonians first, and then excising how many others, with these two, out of the Inspired Letters of the New Dispensation.

Yet how strangely, and at a date comparatively how recent, have the Baptists been led to a recognition of this great Christian duty. Their churches, compared with others, of little worldly endowment, having lost in England the position of national influence which they had won in the days of the Commonwealth and Protectorate,

they had yet been honored of God with faithful preachers. From one of these, William Carey—a convert under the influence of the labors of Thomas Scott, the commentator—proceeded under God the impulse. The son of the parish clerk and parish schoolmaster, under great disadvantages he had acquired but the elements of learning, and was apprenticed to a shoemaker, in consequence of weakness that was thought to unfit him for the farm-work to which he would otherwise have passed. Scott himself was brought from the mazes of Socinianism under the teachings of John Newton of Olney, the friend of Cowper; and Newton himself, the prodigal, was met at sea and amid the slave-trade on the western coast of Africa; how remote and how unlikely, at every link of good influence, was the long chain, that yet, in God's good providence, brought the old gospel down from the hammock, where Newton had at first swung as a profane and infidel sailor, to the humble shoemaker's shop, where Carey cobbled, studied, and prayed. The conquests of Clive at the battle of Plassey had, in India, converted the traders' company into the beginnings of an empire. But the British rulers who won the subject tribes and territory little heeded the language of the people whom they subjected. Clive, it is said, never learned any of the Indian dialects proper of the various peoples whom he led to conquest or reduced to subjection. Of one among the later great governors-general of India, the Marquis of Wellesley, the brother of Wellington, and a man of large intellect and wide statesmanship, it is told by an English writer on India,\* that, once passing through the

\* Mead's *Sepoy Revolt*.



streets of a great Indian city, a Brahmin, with the dignity of which some of their number are such masters, cursed the English viceroy in the name of all the gods of his country. Wellesley, though described by the narrator as the haughtiest of viceroys, knew so little of the language that he made the lowliest reverence to the Hindoo, in utter unconsciousness of the true meaning of the salutation. It was the aim of the British to appropriate the revenues and treasures of the Indian colony; but, to secure this, it was matter of policy, in the minds of their agents generally, to avoid aught that should exasperate the superstitious prejudices of the people. Many, even of English settlers, gave offerings to the idol-temples; and some, attached to heathen mistresses, gave silent or eager aid to the pagan oblations of the mothers of their children. The East India Company was bitterly hostile to all attempts to interfere with the faith of the Hindoos. Carey in his humble shop read the voyages of Cook; and the discovery of heathen islands, that only excited the curiosity of others, awakened his Christian sympathy and compassion. He constructed for his school-children a rude map of the globe, describing its population and its various and erring religions. Become a pastor, but with the smallest stipend, and a father with a growing family, his soul was drawn out to the desolations of ancient paganism.

He had the friendship of the elder Robert Hall, parent of the great scholar and orator, a pastor of strong mind and clear views; of Sutcliffe, another country pastor, devout, sagacious, and earnest; and of Ryland, who had baptized him; and of Andrew Fuller, a man of the clear-

est and strongest intellect, gravely, solidly pious, and yet of few literary advantages. To these, Carey's suggestions for heathen evangelization seemed visionary, and, rather to evade the topic, they proposed his putting into written form his thoughts on the subject. He did so. Called to preach before his Association, he took as his theme a prophecy of Isaiah (liv. 2, 3), of the enlarged tent and lengthened cords that were to take in the Gentiles. In 1792, he preached on it with the two great subdivisions, "Expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God." It led to the formation of a missionary society at Kettering, the seat of Fuller's labors, in October, 1792, and the contributions were £13 2s. 6d. Fuller was its secretary, Carey was its offered missionary. The church of the devout Pearce of Birmingham added a sum of £70, quintupling the original funds. Yet how to any other than the simplest, strongest faith, must the enterprise have seemed one of sovereign absurdity—that of attempting with these puniest means to assail the faith of pagan India and a population of, perhaps, one hundred and sixty millions.

But the churches enlisted were country churches. The London Baptists, when consulted, generally stood aloof. Stennett, to whose pulpit ministrations Howard expressed such warm gratitude and reverence, could not be brought to favor it. The elder Ryland, the father of Carey's friend, a scholar and author, a man of genius and piety, and of whom the statesman William Windham makes respectful mention, had cried with some indignation when the project was by Carey named to him: "Young man, when God

would have the heathen converted, he will do it without your aid or mine." With small children, his wife averse to the voyage, his way shut up as to passage in one of the East India Company's vessels, Carey persisted, and secured, at last, embarkation in a Danish keel, his wife consenting finally to sail if her sister, who was, however, equally with herself, unbelieving as to the wisdom of the undertaking, would accompany her. Thus freighted with discouragement, Carey set sail.

When the question of permitting Christian missionaries in their possessions came up before the Board of Directors of that great mercantile body, one of the directors, depicting the tumult it would excite, said, that he would see a band of devils let loose in India rather than a band of missionaries. Perchance eyes of keener and celestial vision already saw his wish at work; for the population of India counting but one hundred and sixty millions, its subordinate deities, according to their own Brahmins, were in number three hundred and thirty millions, or an average of two separate deities to every man, woman, and child of the teeming myriads of the vast region.

The East India Company was a most potent body in its wealth and its patronage and its parliamentary influence at home. Burke and Sheridan had assailed one of its favored governors, Warren Hastings; and after a trial of years, marked by the most resplendent exhibitions of talent and eloquence, and after fearful evidence produced of malversation and oppression, such orators, with such witnessings, had failed to secure his conviction. Charles James Fox, a statesman of great powers and signal pop-

ularity, had devised, with the aid of Burke, a new charter by an India Bill. Not that Fox favored missionaries; for when consulted, he disapproved them. But the British Parliament and the nation and the Court were against the India Bill of Fox, however skilful its framing or vigorous its advocacy; and it failed.

On his arrival, Carey found himself shut up, after various experiments in indigo-culture, to a refuge in the small Danish settlement of Serampore, an independent region of small extent, but near the English capital of Calcutta. Here he set up a press, which in Calcutta even Wellesley would not then have permitted. His wife became insane; his fellow-laborer Thomas also insane. With these sorrows on either hand under the roof, he went forth to the baptism of his first convert. Had not the faith of a present Christ and the power of an Almighty Spirit sustained the laborer, human zeal might well have faltered when in circumstances so forlorn, after seven years of toil, he led down his first convert to baptism in Christ's name. But as he said, he could plod; and plod he did, till God turned hearts toward him in the India of his chosen residence and in the Britain which he was no more to see. He became a Sanscrit scholar, greater than Sir William Jones, who had been the first of Englishmen to lead in that new field. He completed, in the modern and feebler language of the people around him, a Bengalee Bible, and its finishing was occasion to him of profound and devout joy. God gave him fellow-laborers, Marshman and Ward. The favor of Wellesley, the governor-general, was drawn toward him. He received, though a Dissenter, an appoint-

ment as professor in the college which Wellesley set up, without the authority, and even against the protests, of the East India Company, under whom he acted. Strong in his own energy and in the friendship of the younger Pitt, Wellesley persevered, and brought forward also his more illustrious brother, afterward to be known as the Duke of Wellington, and who, on the field of Assaye, on Indian soil, began the fame so emphasized in Spain and on the field of Waterloo.

But besides the complications encountered thus in the East India Company, the opponents of missions in the *Edinburgh Review*, then the highest organ of British literature, by the witty Sydney Smith, commenced an attack on the whole evangelizing enterprise, as endangering the lives of every Englishman, and as one that ought to be forthwith and ruthlessly suppressed. Some of the older of us may recollect a time when the ill words of that great journal stirred up the wrath of all our country, as it asked scornfully, "Who reads an American book?" It was a blessed and Christian revenge on the maligners of missions, which, in God's good providence, the mission and mission family took upon these their priestly and Parliamentary revilers, when a son-in-law of this same Marshman, the gallant Havelock—"every inch a soldier, and every inch a Christian," as Sir Henry Harding called him—pushing his way against such overwhelming odds, relieved Lucknow, and saved to the British Crown, under God, an empire which Smith had said the missionaries were sure to overthrow. Putting to silence the ignorance of foolish men by patient continuance in well-doing is



apostolic. But it requires apostolic zeal and endurance to obey a precept so calmly brave. The number of versions of the Bible that in part or entire Carey and his coadjutors completed is wondrous. His brother-laborer, Marshman, framed a Chinese version of the Bible. These may be superseded, just as Wycliffe's and Tyndal's and Coverdale's have been, in our own tongue. But they did a good work; and nations have been glad for them, and heaven has been made the richer in its tenantry by their means, in the converts they have won.

Carey, Marshman, and Ward, of their earnings in various ways, gave to the mission cause to the amount of £40,000—probably, when the relative value of money then and now is considered, nigh \$300,000 of our money at present rates. They reared a college. Bishop Heber, a churchman and Christian prelate, writing on Indian soil, publicly lauded the services and character of the men whom Sydney Smith had so blackened.

American Baptists had purposed to continue as they had begun, to aid their English brethren by collections raised here and transmitted thither. But God, in his gracious arrangements, raised up Adoniram Judson, a man of high endowments, rare energy, and true piety. He left our shores a Pædobaptist, studied the Bible, and on reaching Serampore was a convert to our views of the ordinances and church. Without further resources from the Pædobaptist body before sustaining him, he was advised to apply to the English Baptists. But God put it into the hearts of him and his fellow-missionary and convert, Luther Rice, to appeal to the American churches.



Our own body found themselves suddenly called to a work which they had not planned. It was like Paul's Macedonian voyage, a Providence beckoning and leading the blind by a way which they for themselves had not known. Turned from British India, where Judson was not allowed by the jealousy still felt against missionaries to remain, he went perforce to Burmah. It had been a field for a time tilled by Felix Carey, but who, favored by the Burmese government, had accepted an appointment as the Burmese envoy to the British Indian government; thus, as the good father complained, sinking from a missionary to an ambassador. The younger Carey's labors had not much facilitated the missionary toils of Judson. His heroic endurance; his imprisonment; his impending death in the wars between the jealous Burmese and British invading armies; the sickness of his wife; his carrying his nursling babe from heathen door to door, imploring that some Burmese mother would sustain its waning, wailing life; his having his great manuscript version of the Bible rolled up as a log and laid under his head as a pillow in his prison, to disguise it from his pagan tormentors and jailers; the death of babe and mother,—all these are parts of missionary history familiar to all.

The churches gathered in the Karen people, the death of Judson's heroic coadjutor, Boardman, who labored especially for them, after being carried in pining consumption to see, at the river, the baptism of several converted heathen,—these, too, we can but recount hastily; and the deaths of others of the band; and the sheaves,

large and rapid, they were permitted to gather, are they not too familiar to bear prolonged recital?

Then came the death of Judson at sea with such unconquerable exhaustion of bodily strength, and yet such salient joy of soul, that he felt, with all his ties to home and life, as he viewed eternity, the joy of a schoolboy going from tasks and vigils to the old dear homestead. These are among the illustrations God has given to show that he loves not his servants to war a warfare at their own charges or without present and rare refreshments of spirit by the way.

The English missions were sustained at home by men of rare worth and power. Fuller, a man of great solidity and force of mind, had dreaded fashion and wealth as either sustaining or controlling the missionary work. As he used grimly to say at the beginning, they had no "respectable" people to countenance them—no capitalist in the chair at the annual meetings, to whom orations might be addressed. Himself a theologian of rare compass and force, his word, from pulpit and press, was a power in the church, and felt occasionally in the English Parliament even. When some "old Indian"—to use the British phrase for a wealthy resident of the East returned to Britain—had begun a war of pamphlets against the mission, Fuller was prompt to reply, and the man who encountered him in argument generally bore the marks of a bludgeon from the encounter. A lover, in his youthful impenitent days, of wrestling, he confessed to a Scottish friend, Dr. John Brown, father of the accomplished author of *Rab and his Friends*, that his fancy sometimes,

even in the desk, as the eye fell on some stalwart form moving along the aisle, would ask how such a man would stand a tussle. When a Prendergast, a member of the British Parliament, in the course of a heated discussion of missions, asseverated that he, who had been in India, knew that Carey preached from a tub in the streets of Calcutta, and the heathen were so excited that he could only by flight escape their violence, Fuller, knowing that it was altogether at variance with Carey's habits and character, published a letter sturdily denying the truth of the statement. Prendergast, a noted duellist, inquired of the good Wilberforce, who in Parliament eloquently and fearlessly advocated our missions, who this Andrew Fuller was, intimating that he intended to challenge him to an encounter on the field of honor. Wilberforce smilingly assured him that he knew Fuller, but that he was not a man who could be moved to such a conference.

Another of our British worthies was the younger Robert Hall, of whom his tutor, Professor Dugald Stewart, said, that his style had the excellences of Johnson and Addison without the faults of either. Sir James Mackintosh, himself a philosopher and statesman of the highest order, said, that men could not understand why all Greece flocked to Demosthenes, until they had listened to Robert Hall. Bishop Bloomfield, holding the diocese of London, was recognized, when Greek scholarship ruled British literature, to be, after the death of Porson and of Parr, the first Greek scholar of all England. Of him it is said by his son and biographer, that he was accustomed to keep the works of Hall on his study-table as a model

in his hours of composing. The elder Bulwer, in one of his fictions, introduces Hall as a wondrous example of powers highly developed, and pain intense and exhaustive meanwhile patiently borne. Greg, a contemporaneous writer of our own times, and of skeptical views, yet takes occasion to rate Hall as one of the greatest of the Christian writers in his time. Now, Hall, though less the advocate from the press, was the friend and eulogist, of our English Indian missionaries. He threw down the gauntlet in a very stinging sentence to Smith regarding his *Review*, but Smith never ventured to lift the glove and enter the lists. His friends say, that Smith regretted the attack, but he never had the grace to withdraw and suppress it. Intended to pillory its meek victims, it has survived to brand its author as a false prophet—a Balaam, who cursed as heartily as an Indian Balak could desire him, but who, less wise than the seer, had forgotten to ask himself, “How shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?”

On our shores we have had, in Thomas Roberts and Evan Jones and his son, laborers among the Cherokee Indians, first in their Georgia home and then in their transfer to the Indian Territory; and to the latest laborer the tribes are indebted for a Cherokee translation of the New Testament. Native laborers of great excellence and devotedness and of wide usefulness have been raised up.

The Welsh of Britain have sent to the Bretons of France a laborer who has many years toiled in that antique and picturesque part of the French territory and nation, and given them in their own loved Breton dialect

a New Testament. The success in conversions has not yet been large, but the late distinguished Emile Souvestre was said in his later days to have invited the visits and teachings of this faithful missionary.

The labors of Oncken in Germany and their widely-branching influence over Sweden and Poland and Russia must be familiar. Not by building on the old foundations of the German and Swiss Anabaptists, but in independent toil and teaching, his great success has under God's blessing been achieved.

The establishment and increase of Baptist churches in Sweden, through the efficient labors of Wiberg and his coadjutors, forms one of the most interesting chapters in the history of our missions in Europe. More than two hundred churches and over ten thousand members are successfully pleading, in that country, for the spirituality of the churches, such as the Lord designed them to be; for the observance of the ordinances as he established them; and for soul-liberty as the indefeasible heritage of all Christian men.\*

In Greece, our mission has been withdrawn. In Spain, it trembles, amid the present political convulsions, on the verge of a temporary suppression, as seems probable. In

\* The work in Sweden was first commenced, in 1855, by the American Baptist Publication Society, who appointed the Rev. Andreas Wiberg superintendent of colportage. Though meeting with persecution and difficulties, the work has gone steadily on, and each year bears witness to large additions to their churches, while very many of their numbers are seeking a home and a field of Christian labor in our own land.—EDITOR.

Paris and Lyons, after many early discouragements we are now to all human appearance firmly planted, with more hopes of success.

To Western Africa, God sent in an early stage Lot Carey from Virginia, a man of color, but one of heroic mould, taken away in middle life by a sudden explosion. Our Southern colored churches are a vast opportunity and a vast responsibility.

As to the work remaining to be accomplished, it seems to some Quixotic to look forward to a universal reception of the gospel. We see naught to secure it but God's grace; for that agency we are slow to think any task, however wide, to be impossible. Carey's project of assailing India seemed, to casual reason, a fatuity founded on sheer ignorance. Later observers have learned to think very differently. The English government, once bitterly inimical, is now by many of its civil and military appointees warmly favorable to missions. Sir Bartle Frere, and Sir Henry Lawrence, and Sir John Lawrence have been among Christian rulers not ashamed of their faith before the pride of Brahminism, and not slow to express large hopes. The worst foe of English domination in the Sepoy war was the Mohammedan fanaticism. If the educated Hindoos were to be Christians, they would be the best safeguard. A Hindoo gentleman of English education, but without Christian faith, has said of the Mohammedans, the old oppressors of his people, that even now they are three-fourths ruffian and one-fourth voluptuary in their personal character. If this be a prevalent judgment, the co-operation of Hindoo and Mohammedan



is not likely to be hearty in uprisings against British sovereignty.

A revival of Mohammedanism is among the probabilities of the age. Some have advocated the recognition of the prophetic character of the great Arab leader. We see no ground for the verdict, and no hope of prosperity in admitting the delusion. Our own church in the last Sepoy war had a converted Mohammedan confessor, Walayat Ali, who became a martyr rather than deny Christ at Delhi, one great focal-point of the revolt.

Dr. Pfander, under the Church Missionary Society, has had converts of this class. We trust that they may be multiplied; but the probabilities are that Mohammedanism will make a fierce and bloody end.

So, as to Judaism, some deny the fact of its acceptability. Our own denomination, in the times of the Commonwealth, had a learned Jew, Du Veil, author of books of true ability, who became, after passing through Romanism, a convert to our views of polity. In our own country we had Frey, a man of sincerity and earnestness, though his judgment was not always equal to his zeal. The generation that has seen Neander, with his vast erudition, his childlike simplicity, and his deep philosophy, a humble learner of Christ's gospel, will not believe the impossibility of similar conversions. The philosophic Mendelsohn resisted the appeals of Lavater; but Mendelsohn's descendant, the accomplished and most amiable musical composer, was regarded as a sincere Christian.

We have Infidelity, but its forms are Protean, and its prophecies, many and confident, have been signally and

repeatedly confuted in the actual results of Providence. God has spoken, man may trust. Christ has borne the weight of the missionary undertaking in his own Incarnation and Sacrifice and Resurrection and Ascension. All that remains, in comparison with this, is but petty detail. We cannot dismiss the hopes of the churches, or relinquish the task of the churches, without disregarding the pledges of him who is the Infinite Truth, and the covenant of him who wields a Limitless Omnipotence.

One of the great questions of our times is how to reconcile the two warring classes of "Haves" and "Wants." In the shape of Socialism and in the dread form of the Commune, as the late troubles in France saw it inaugurated, how fearful is the collision and how inevitable the general ruin when Labor looks askance on all the gains of Capital, and when Capital learns to harden its heart and close its ears against the protests and claims of Toil. The despotisms of the Old World, in Egypt and India, have known the fearful effect of Castes, isolated and mutually repellent and distrustful, the one of the other; but, amid the advantages and progress of modern civilization, if castes be formed, men of envious greed on the one side and obdurate pride on the other side, it is certain that no policies can long avert a forcible collision, and the result of it must be mutual carnage and national devastation. Visit a prison, however well ordered, and you see in its tenants, there immured, the men who, in disregard of the rights, property, liberties, and lives of their fellows, made their own fancied and passionate *Want* the law, and then flung themselves on the resources of their neighbors, the

clan of the "Haves," and proposed or effected such wrongs and woes, that Society, for its own protection, must put them within walls and under the charge of prison-guards. So, in political life, how sure is the result to be social destruction when the needs of a party or its leaders trample down the barriers of law.

Commerce has sometimes comforted itself with the delusion that in its exchanges mutual wants assuredly and peacefully met and relieved each other, and that the law of supply and demand, if left with an unchecked freedom, would bring general abundance and the ease and welfare of all nations. But when the enterprise of our own manufacturers and traders sends—as was not many years since done—casks of New England rum in the same keels that bore to the Turk and his Christian subjects New England missionaries, was the free-trade healthful or baleful? When Christian Britain has forged, in her Birmingham workshops, idols for the East Indian market; or raised on Indian soil opium to be forced, under British treaties and British fleets, upon the reluctant and protesting heathen of China, was the free "supply" to the idolatrous and diseased "demand" honorable to the national name or honest to the national creed? When, in years very recent, vessels in southern seas, to propitiate heathen islanders, vessels manned by British commanders and sailors, went in quest of human heads—a coveted trophy prized by some of these islanders as won from others of their heathen neighbors—and in consequence of the blind rage of the savages whose shores had thus been invaded, the noble career of a young English bishop, John Cole-

ridge Patterson, was sacrificed, the islanders requiting on the Christian Briton the wrongs suffered by themselves from the trading Britons, was the law of supply and demand guiltless of that martyr's blood? Had British traffickers any right to clutch gain in such methods, and to bring down on their country such cruel requitals?

So, in the dealings of the civilized with the barbarian on our own shore, have our Indians, when their lands tempted our cupidity, found us always mindful of the faith of treaties and of the laws of common justice? The early Puritan worthy, left on the British shores, regretted, as he said, when told of some Indians slain, that they had not converted some before they had killed any. In the early wars of our Revolution, when the Moravian Indians were so mercilessly butchered in that very colony which in its early stages and by its first founder, William Penn, had exhibited such kindliness and studious equity to the red man, was there not a manifestation of cruel greed and reckless hate that may well be deplored and made cause of national humiliation and abasement? When, in Southern Africa, the boors of Hollander origin burst in on the peaceful missionary settlement of David Livingstone, enraged against methods that kept them from appropriating the lands and herds, and from compelling the slave-drudgery, of his converts, was there not hugest wrong? And in how many wars of this kind in our own nation has treasure been lavished and life sacrificed, with a recklessness and profusion that can expect no benediction from God, when good faith and patience and kindliness would have been economical and safe? Civilization

and Liberty and Progress are lofty words; but they cannot hide the enormity and the terrible perilousness of craving thus—because our fellow-man is of other hue or of inferior culture—his country and his life, that Ahab may round out his territories from the confiscated portion of Naboth.

The gospel brings, in its remedy for these evils, a method of relief as potent as it is simple. It teaches us to look upward, seeing in the common Maker and Father the source of all good. What we have we hold from him, the pensioners ourselves of his bounty, intended to be the stewards, in his service, for the behoof of our fellows. The shepherd-lad who, in the eighth Psalm, looks upward from the hillsides of Palestine, and, watching the stars, exclaims, "When I consider thy heavens, . . . the moon and the stars, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him" (Psalms viii. 3, 4), saw, centuries ago, that the highest glory of his race was that they had a God mindful of them, and "visiting" them by revelations and ultimately by his Incarnation. He belongs, when brought into that school, to a class who HAVE as their loftiest privilege a Maker to be their Caretaker, "mindful" in his providence of their meanest needs; and if in his government "visiting" them with seasonable checks and reproofs and chastisements, yet also, with these, adding high benedictions and intertwining the great boon of a Redeemer, human, atoning, and restoring; and preparing them by his lessons and grace to "visit" himself ultimately in the heaven of yet higher glories. Thus schooled, David came to be the



champion of his people, as, before him, a Joseph had been the blessing of all Egypt, and a Moses the guide of the Exodus and the leader toward the Promised Land. The men who know what they HAVE in God know also what they *need* or WANT, and what is the common necessity and what the common refuge of their contemporaries and countrymen—a knowledge and a fear of the same God.

In the gospel, which finishes the Bible, and rounds the discoveries of our needs and the rent-roll of our privileges, man is taught, that in God's grace are set before him and before his whole race the loftiest hopes and the gravest duties. He is proffered in Christ a free pardon and a finished righteousness; and the command then comes to the regenerated believer, "Freely ye have received, freely give." You hold, by the law of grace from heaven; you keep, by the law of graciousness toward earth. Loved of Christ, you are in his strength to love your neighbor, the forlorn, the remote, the savage, the unloving, and the naturally unlovely. Their want, in the depth of their ignorance and the blackness of their wretchedness, is an appeal to your Christian compassion. Thus taught, the *want* of our fellow-mortals demands no impossible community of goods, no fanciful and immoral socialism, that would sacrifice liberty, progress, and order, the peace of the household, and the advance of the nation. But as Brainard, in the smoky wigwam of the savage, fetid and dark, consoled himself in God, and received strength to endure and to witness and to win; as Henry Martyn, the prize-man of an English university, stood amid the chattering and benighted beggars of Hindostan, serene, loving,



and compassionate; as Judson, expelled from British India and driven in upon heathen Burmah, after suffering inconceivably from hope delayed and sacrifices patiently borne, became, in critical days, a translator and a mediating ambassador in the interests of the British people who had once expelled him, and of the Burman people who had but recently ordered his butchery, repaying to Christian and to heathen wrongers their ill-doings by kind doings,—did not each of these holy men—Brainard, Martyn, and Judson—show how the HAVES may most winningly and most heroically turn, in some critical season, upon the clan of the WANTS, and in Christ's own temper and in Christ's train put down evil by good, and overcome misconstructions and enmity and greed and outrage by the love that beareth all things and hopeth all things and endureth all things?

Prayer, against which many in our times are so unreasonably prejudiced, is the longing of a filial WANT on the earth, appealing with boldness and gladness and reverence to a parental HAVE upon the throne of heaven. It is but want feeling its needs lessened and its woes relieved and its gloom irradiated, in the very act of approach. It has obtained grace for grace, and in the answers it receives it becomes a true member of the great tribe of the Haves. With God around and God before it, it inherits in Christ all things.

Thus taught, the Christian becomes more diligent, cheerful, and successful. His prayers, aided by a free Spirit and built on a sure Scripture, take hold on the prophecies and are upheld by the providence of an

almighty Ruler and a Parent of unerring prescience and of exhaustless beneficence.

Among these prophecies of ancient date, but which modern history, instead of falsifying, is, through each age, verifying with fresh increments of evidence, is the pledge, ancient as the fields not yet dry from the receding deluge, that Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem. The English-speaking people possess at this day how broad a belt of territory in their regions and colonies. Over how large a belt of the seas, daily widening, is their commerce, daily mending its speed, spreading its fleets; and, in the sailors that man them, extending its influence among all people. The great possession of the people thus favored is the Bible, that tells not only of the past—of their origin, but of the future—of their terrene and their eternal destiny. Of that book, the Christ is the great Theme and Radiance.

When Japheth is become more and more lord of the Haves, in his acquaintance with the old homes and literatures of Shem, and especially in his knowledge of this the Christ, born of Hebrew lineage on the soil of Palestine, how singular has been the experience that unexpectedly burst upon the scholars of a former generation, out of missionary explorations in part, if not in the chiefest measure. It was the discovery that the Sanscrit, the old and most perfect and refined language of the world, was the language of Japhethian conquerors of India, and Japhethian settlers of Europe as well; that though Hebrew was of Semitic, the Greek and the Latin and the old Gothic were of kin to the tongues of the writers of

the Veda. When men would have, some of them, forgotten it, others of them perversely disputing it, he brought them to see that of one blood had been the settlers of the far West and the settlers of the far East.

When our Lord contemplated his sacrifice, he said that, lifted up, he would draw all men unto him. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin characters were inscribed on his cross, the language of his own ancestry, the language of what was then the world's chief literature, and also that of what was then the world's chief empire. The apostles, of a Jewish lineage, passed the torch of their testimony to Gentile bearers; but how little probable did it at first seem that, amid the divergencies of the weary centuries, there should be lying hidden the traces of a common origin.

In heart answering to heart as the gospel went on its way from land to land and from tribe to tribe, how did each persecution and each heresy but bring up additional evidences that the nations of mankind, whatever the soil that they trod and the training that they had received, were marred by a common sinfulness, but possessed of a similar conscience, bowed by common needs and susceptible of common hopes, and ultimately capable of becoming, all barriers and partition-walls thrown down, one in Christ. Their traditions, their tongues, their nursery-tales, even, told around so many fires in so many dialects,—all of the original tongues and all of the acquired dialects were proved capable of moral agglutination into the Christian church, and of delight in the one redemption, and of fraternity entire and inseparable in the one Re-

generating Paraclete. God has not left himself without witness as to man's *need* of him, and as to his compassionate yearnings toward the obdurate and desperate prodigal, far as his wanderings had been, yet surveyed and cared for by the Father's providence, yet solicited in the promises of Holy Writ, and yet sought out by the missions of Christian men.

The share of our churches in their days of comparatively smaller means, in the translation and circulation of the Scripture, has been early and has been widespread. In the Sanscrit, in the Bengalee, in the Burmese, in the Chinese, in the Cherokee, in the Karen, in the Breton of these later generations, we have, as a people, borne our testimony and witness. And yet how much remains to be perfected, and how much to be supplemented, in the growing largeness of the diffusion and in the closer faithfulness of the exposition. Christ, in the single heart, is the hope of glory. Christ, in his collected churches, is the pledge of a worldwide evangelization, and the bond of a worldwide union.

XII.

BAPTISTS AND THE FUTURE.





## BAPTISTS AND THE FUTURE.

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UPON an old sun-dial in All Souls' College, one of the houses in the University of Oxford, is a significant sentence. It is a motto coming from the heathen poet Martial: "Pereunt et Imputantur;" or, in English, as it might be rendered yet more compactly than in its Latin original, "Spent, but Charged." The framer of that sun-dial was Sir Christopher Wren, who built, from the ashes of the Great Fire, the cathedral of St. Paul's at London, and restored many others of the city churches, gone down in that conflagration. His thoroughness of construction in so small a work as this college time-teller for the gownsmen of All Souls has made their dial exact and serviceable for nigh two centuries. It has mutely reminded the student and the idler that moments spent, must yet be accounted for.\* The old Roman epigrammatist and the renowned British architect have thus but renewed the solemn admonition that already came pealing down from yet earlier centuries. The moments that steal so quietly on are very easily evanished from our memories, like the falling sand in the hour-glass, and the gliding shadow on the dial-face; but they are registered in the book of the

\* Burrows's *Worthies of All Souls*, Lond., 1874, p. 233.

divine and eternal retributions. And as with time, so with property; as with wealth, so with power and influence; as with the body and earth, so with the soul and its immortal capabilities. God has put stewardship into the entire texture of human society. "We are members one of another;" not merely parts of a great community, political or ecclesiastical; not merely drops in the grand current of the nation and the age; but, as the French phrase it, we are sharers in the solidarity of a race. Eden had glimpses of us; Eternity cannot forget us. The tippler who habitually guzzles his rare and uncertain earnings at the tavern bar, and also, when he can find there trust, drinks without present coin, has the liquid fire soon gulped down the sodden throat; but on the books of his landlord, and in the wan cheeks of his hungry babes, and in the rags of his pining wife, what has been so soon "spent" by him is for a long and dreary term "charged" elsewhere. And so the examples and memories of those who are gone before us are a part of our heritage, to be heeded, and to be used, and to be recalled in the accounting. The records of the Past are the monuments of the Present, and enter into the responsibilities of the Future. The old pagan poet who wrote the motto which Wren quoted may have seen and heard Paul, for aught that we know. Both were at Rome at the same time, and he may have walked under the Arch of Titus, as it was in course of erection. The apostle John, his contemporary, if that teacher had been consulted, could have told the poet more than he ever dreamed of the reach and force of Martial's own saying. The Hebrew

Christians in Rome, jostling Martial perhaps on the walk, as they flitted past the memorial which the Roman conquerors reared of the Jewish nation's overthrow, the obliteration of their sanctuary, and the cessation of their sacrifices, may well have recalled the slighted warnings of prophet and Psalmist, and the unheeded predictions of the Master and his apostles, to their own erring and obdurate countrymen. The opportunity had come—had gone—but the solemn reckoning for those wasted privileges remained; and the longer it was forgotten, the vaster and the drearier the huge arrears of guilt: "Spent, but charged."

Some Catholic writers of France have thought that the first idea of a philosophy of history began with their great Bossuet in his *Universal History*. Others of them have, more thoughtfully and justly, recognized the truth that it underlay, centuries before, the work of the renowned Latin Father, St. Augustine, and which he called *The City of God*. Later European thinkers have dwelt on the services of Vico and Herder and Hegel to the same grand idea. An American Protestant might point to our own illustrious countryman, the elder Jonathan Edwards, in his *History of Redemption*, as evolving the same controlling thought of a continued purpose and a regular development in the affairs of the nations, alike those of the evangelized and the unevangelized. But, in truth, the great central principle was in Apostle and in Psalmist ages before Augustine was converted from his Manicheism. When the inspired David represented the Son, yet to be incarnate, who, as Lord, was to receive universal and

divine homage, and all kingdoms and all people were warned that it was at their peril to withhold the loyal confession,—even then that second Psalm, brief as it was, gathered up the webs of the centuries, all dynasties, all revolutions, all discoveries, into one compact knot of the inevitable and divine purposes, and the irrefragable and divine oracles. And when Paul, in his Epistles, spoke of the Redeemer as the Second Adam, and led back the thoughts of his reader to the first Adam, head of a common Fall, and thence onward to the Manifest God, as the Lord and Pledge of a common Redemption in his character as the Second Adam, the lines were surveyed for a philosophy of human history—a philosophy true, full, and divine. A course of rule that began in Eden hurries not, pauses not, till it rests in the Judgment Day, as the Second Adam shall then administer the eternal sanctions, alike of his law and of his gospel. Paradise, Sinai, Calvary, dot the centuries as great points; and they bind the whole household of man to the expectation of the audit, as it shall come from the White Throne and the Opened Books. We “spend,” but He “charges.”

Man passes. Opportunity passes. The age passes. But the right and duty and the reckoning do not pass, and cannot pass, because the word and the God may not pass away—not one jot of the word, not one attribute of the God, Perfect and Immutable and Immaculate.

We, as a denomination of Christians, have, in the advantages of the time and land where our lot is cast, and in the memory and inspiring examples of the fathers who have preceded us, our new hopes suggested by each

added week of life to the toiler, and by each new avenue for benevolence and usefulness and piety opening before the furrow of the sower and the sickle of the reaper. Gone are the fathers, but not their remembrance, or their influence, or our own indebtedness to God for what the toils of these fathers earned, the tears of these fathers bathed, and the blood of these martyrs enriched, and the faithful cry of these witnesses commended. We have entered into the ample and consecrated heritage; and the Lord is surveying, with a divine tenderness and gentleness, each new enlistment of laborers on his acres and in his vineyard; over which, through its every inch, hovers the cloud of the prayers which these honored predecessors sent up; and under its every clod lies the seed, and from its every trunk grow the scions, which they so faithfully and patiently planted.

It was said to have been an utterance, to an American Baptist, of the late Frederick W. Krummacher,—the royal chaplain at Potsdam, but more commonly known among the Christians not only of his own native country, Germany, but of Britain and America also, as the author of *Elijah* and *Elisha*,—that in his judgment the Baptists had “a future.”

God has not taught his people to pronounce too confidently on the results of coming generations and their changes as to families and communities, political or ecclesiastical. Yet there is great cause of gratitude in the remembrance of fathers who have done worthily; and of hope, long as our confidence is not in them or their graves, but in the God who guided them, and upon whom

they loyally leaned, in dark days and through hard conflicts.

In the literature of the English tongue it is cause of profound thanksgiving that God gave to our fathers men like Bunyan in an earlier day, and Keach in an inferior grade; and in a later day, the learning and biblical and rabbinical lore of Gill; the clear and massive theology of Andrew Fuller; John Foster among the greatest essayists of the tongue in the solidity of his material, though overlaid by the heaviness of his style; and among our Scottish brethren, Robert Haldane and Archibald McLean; in Ireland, Alexander Carson, the warm-hearted and keen-eyed, with a Damascus blade that he was not slow to draw. In the Welsh pulpit, the name of Christmas Evans became known, not only to the principality and the men using its old Celtic tongue, but to all English-speaking Christians as well, both by the eulogy of Hall on his power, and by the specimen of his illustrations, as to Christ's sacrifice, so widely circulated on either side of the Atlantic.

Suspected, as we sometimes have been, of overlooking the religious privileges of the household and the force of the hereditary principle in the transmission of religion, yet, to a Baptist of Scotland, Christian Britain owes one of its very best works on this theme. It is Christopher Anderson, in his treatise on the *Domestic Constitution*, the same scholar who wrote laboriously and usefully on the English versions of the Bible. We had a Benjamin Davies, a scholar of the old mould, a man of large frame, but with the simplicity and tenderness of a little child,



full of Oriental lore, and one of our revisers in the Bible Commission now in session. In our own country we have had Baldwin, but, above all, Wayland, a prince among us as a thinker on moral science, and as a most eloquent writer on the missionary enterprise when it was more generally than now held visionary and Utopian. As a reasoner, and as a biographer, favored with Judson as his subject, his works must live and win a widening circle of students. In the walks of public life, we have had in this land a Nathaniel Macon, whom John Randolph and John Jay pronounced, though of opposite political parties, among the very wisest of the men they had known, and whom Randolph in his last days called the best and purest man he had ever met. We have had a Tallmadge and a Marcy, an Ira Harris and a Richard Fletcher, among our jurists and judges. In the pulpit were our chief activities; and there the Mercers and the Semples and Broaduses, William Staughton, Daniel Sharp, Baron Stow, Spencer H. Cone, Archibald Maclay, Duncan Dunbar, Bartholomew T. Welch and Richard Fuller, not long gone home, and John S. Maginnis—a loss to theology by his early death—were preachers and pastors of much usefulness. We have had in the Old World some eminent converts to our views, like Baptist W. Noel, of noble family, a chaplain to the queen, the brother of an earl, once, it is said, proffered an Indian mitre, which since that day, in the see proffered to him, has become that of an archbishop. But from all these advantages conscience brought him to cast in his lot with a people illustrated, indeed, with the pre-eminent genius

of a Robert Hall, but among whom his social privileges, according to the world's usual standard, were greatly abridged. One of the most startling exhibitions of bigotry that we remember in our day was the bitter scorn with which our English Congregational brethren turned upon Noel at this change, as if grieved that, in quitting the Establishment, he did not pause to cast in his lot with this portion of the Nonconformist body.

In the development of literature through the religious press, which in our country has taken on the most wondrous proportions, our own churches have cause for large exultation before God. As Chalmers remarked in his time, the journals of these later days contain often editorials that would, a little time since, have been highly praised if found forming pages in elaborate volumes. Yet the periodical, prompt and recurrent, cannot fitly or exhaustively discuss some topics that must, to be justly handled, require larger space and longer preparation than the editor or his allied contributors can command. The newspaper must and does aid the library. But the library must still do its share, and in yet larger degrees than heretofore, to meet the calls of Providence and the needs of the age.

In provision for education, both secular and theological, there has been an outlay of generous contribution and pious sacrifice, and patriarchal devotedness and assiduity, that may well excite admiration. Nathaniel Kendrick and Hascall and Sherwood and John M. Peck and others have graven their names deeply on the hearts of the churches, and in the pulpit their effective foresight and

generosity must have, in continuous supplies of new evangelists and pastors, strong power.

On missions, our churches bestowed the beginning of their strength; and on the Bible, so numerous translated and so widely scattered, their zeal has sent out its record. Their work may be revised, but the days of the first planners will come into remembrance anew hereafter in Eastern fields; as now, in English literature, the toils of recent investigators bring out the services of Wycliffe and Tyndal, though the foundations of these earlier workers are overlaid in the minds of ordinary readers by the structures of more recent laborers. In the West Indian missions of our English Baptist brethren, when the planters of Jamaica tore down and burnt the places of worship, and Knibb's life was threatened, the dauntless and resolute man returned to England to make a protest, that did its large share in extorting, or at least expediting, the resolve of the imperial government to end slavery and to pay the millions of the national treasury to compensate the slaveholder.

The cause of freedom and of democracy is on the advance among the nations; and far as it spreads it needs an open Bible, and a true free church, and the free Spirit from God's large bounty, to make national freedom either practicable, genuine, or enduring. Our duties here grow with our opportunities. We have at this day our missions, English and American, in the very city of Rome, and under the shadow of the Vatican. Can this last? Not if the doctrine of the Syllabus be practically enforced; and pontifical infallibility is pledged, if it can

grasp the power, to make the Syllabus the law of Christendom. With each onward plunge of the people, it does not follow that true or permanent deliverance can come. It must begin in an enlightened conscience, and an informed judgment, and a will regenerate and warped heavenward. The truth makes free. The Spirit of the Lord is the great guardian of real enfranchisement. We suppose a free church, with its open paths and its open Bibles, is the Master's own safeguard. In auguries of progress, apart from his benediction, we have scant trust.

How full of hope is it that the tongue of our British kinsmen and our own is so rapidly becoming the predominant language of commerce and travel and general literary intercourse. But a half century since, the French seemed likely to be the tongue of refinement and diplomacy all the world over; Germany next appealed to its literature and erudition, and hoped to claim the sceptre. But both, we believe, now admit that the present aspect is that of the yet-widening currency of the English tongue wherever commerce, adventure, or education journey round the globe. The Baptists of Britain and America speak now to a mass of Englishmen many times more diffused and more influential than the nations and cities addressed by the writers and speakers of the tongue in the days of the American Revolution.

The poor are coming afresh into the purview of the statesman and of the man of kindly instincts. It is to the credit of the British Ritualists, much as we deprecate their approaches to Rome, that they are endeavoring to win and attach the poor, whom Methodism and Dissent

have comparatively allowed to fall out of their sphere of activity and testimony. But the system of the great Romish Church has, in its own uncurbed action, and over the fields it exclusively controls, been the fosterer of the ignorance, the listlessness, and the ferocity that make pauperism most terrible to the affluent, and most wretched for the poor themselves.

The gospel must go, with the charity of its Divine Author, not only to the operatives to whom in early time the Methodists and the Nonconformists bore it, but to a lower stratum of society—the homeless and the schoolless and the listless, who hover between mendicity and crime. A blessed work opens here; but it is a vast burden, and requires a heroic faith to grasp it.

And yet it is in such an age, when the moral side of man's nature affords the only leverage for the uplifting of the forlorn and hopeless from their physical degradation, that Materialism appears most arrogantly on the fields of mental and physical science. Make it the current faith of a community; and if the past history of the races is to be trusted, freedom, knowledge, order, and prosperity go down into the general ruin. A godliness that has the promise of the life beyond is, in fact, the grand recuperating energy of the life that now is.

The Bible tells, with a rude energy taught from the skies, its apostles, and its prophets, of the rust of gold. It literally rusts not. But morally the rust is a fearful peril and a tremendous poison. Made the god of the statesman, and where are the patriots who may stand up, when gold has bought purchasable votes, and fraudulent elec-



tions, and venal judges, and legislatures that frame absurd and corrupt laws for those who can reward the perjured law-makers the most liberally and promptly? Old Rome, in her pagan insensibility, perished under such rusting; and the nineteenth-century civilization cannot endure, as well as did Paganism, the terrible corrosion of gold, thus made to represent duty and happiness and right. If the gospel go out, and Materialism take its place, the terrible picture of the Apocalypse as to Babylon, ripe for her overthrow, would become a sure and wide reality. Some have doubted the wisdom and equity of studying these prophetic pages with any idea that Antichrist is to be identified with religious bodies now laboring. We answer, that Stuart is worthy of honor for his services in the cause of biblical study and the many most excellent students whom he trained. But his readiness to accept Grotius and the Catholic Hug and the Rationalist Eichhorn as expositors of Revelation was, we judge, a grievous unhappiness. Barnes, though belonging to a school of Presbyterianism by which Stuart was held as its chief exegete, deserted, as he commented on the New Testament, when he reached Revelations, the guidance of Stuart to accept that of Elliott. So the American editor of that portion of Lange's great Bible commentary which discusses the Apocalypse has gone over from Stuart to Elliott, evangelical, erudite, and, as we think, far more trustworthy than Grotius, who wrote in Roman Catholic France, amid the blandishments of Roman Catholic scholars. They proclaimed at his death, that he was on the verge of joining their communion; and a Jesuit scholar of Holland has



lately and learnedly argued for the truth of this statement. Whether this were so or not, Grotius, writing in the French Court, fixed there as Swedish ambassador, amid Catholic surroundings, was scarce a candid and competent witness on the true nature of the New Testament Antichrist.

Is the great Latin Church the only antagonist? Is not the Greek communion in its present form greatly erring? Many, even of missionary laborers on Eastern fields, judge the prospects of Protestant laborers would be sorely changed for the worse on Turkish soil should the Mohammedan give place to the Russian; and students of prophecy have for generations looked to the Hebrew prophecies of Gog and Magog as betokening a terrible peril to the cause of truth on this side.

What is our hope in the collision between the false forms of religion and the true? Not in civilization; not in political progress; not in the growth of art or the activity of a press redoubling and cheapening its issues, like locust-clouds in their wide diffusion. All may be useful; but all these, too, may be baneful, except as they are guided and upheld by the gospel of the Nazarene. The Hope of the world came out of the stable and the manger, out of the carpenter-shop at Nazareth and the tomb borrowed from him of Arimathea. All the ages have their one sure anchorage in that Messiah.

If the church fight the battles of her Head, she must be content to let him cipher out her resources and dictate her policy and campaigns. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord of hosts.

She may not barter away Truth for the sake of a peace

fallacious and transitory in its date and pernicious in its results. Of old, the nominal church made, in the shape of Gnosticism and of Alexandrian Eclecticism, a hollow peace with Greek philosophy. She was overreached in the negotiation, and sold herself to bondage and error. The same nominal church made peace with the Manicheism of the East in some of the old heresies, and what was the result but shame and crime and moral death?

It is so yet. The truth of God, biblical, God-given, and God-guarded, knows no surrender and accepts no leagues. His word is not to be lowered to man's arbitrary will and self-confident philosophy.

As Jansenism became scriptural, it became persecuted and proscribed in France. But as it went under the ban, it remained, nevertheless, a power. Some of the noblest results in the French literature—some of the noblest names in French legislation and jurisprudence—trace their pedigree to the biblical element, the developed conscience, and the regulated affections which they learned of the men and women of Port Royal.

So will it be for other tongues and literatures and lands as well. God's book in its place of supremacy open to every reader—the schoolbook and the household oracle, the Scriptures of God—is yet to be the law of all the nations. He who was transfigured had Moses and Elijah for attendants there. They spoke of a Law Revealed; and that old Law, once dishonored, again Restored. The man of Sinai, the first Receiver; the man of Carmel, the second Proclaimer—the two were golden taches annexing the Christ to the Law, and affixing the New to the Old

Testament. If Christianity, like her Divine Author and Head, is to be transfigured, and attract the admiration and trust of the peopled earth, it must be a Christianity thoroughly scriptural and thoroughly spiritual. For this what are the resources? They are, on the earth, in the asking church; they are, in the heavens, in the answer of the Father and the Advocate and the Comforter to the church thus upward in her gaze, and consistent, contrite, and patient in her asking. In this sign, Zion conquers.

But the grand encouragement to effort, patient and unrelenting; to a hope which, like Abraham's, hopes against hope, and refuses to see difficulties, however tall and dire, when over them divine grace and the Messiah's destiny summon us,—the permanent ground of confidence for the Church of the Most High is where Christ, the great Head, placed it; and where apostles, after their Lord's ascent to heaven, found it; and where prophets, before that Lord's advent, had fixed it. As Malachi embodies it, in the closing leaf of the Old Testament, it is with him, with the God who planned the campaign and dictated the instructions. Yet had he "the residue of the Spirit."\* The last prophet of the Earlier Dispensation is speaking of the first formation of our race. God laid the foundation of human society, not in polygamy, but in monogamy; the same plenitude of creative energy that stored the constellations on high, and the round planet of our earth with all the varieties of power, splendor, and faculty in the animal, vegetable, and mineral world, might have surrounded Adam with a train like the harem of Solomon.

\* Mal. ii. 15.

Seeking a goodly seed, the Framer of the race built marriage, honored, equal, and holy, into the corner-stone of human society, from no lack of power on his part, but because "he sought a holy seed." So, in revelation, the infinite fulness of that Informing Spirit, who furnished the existing oracles of Scripture, might have made the volumes of our Bible numerous as the tomes that crowd the shelves of the Boodhist. Their sacred books are many times in size the volumes of our Old and New Testaments. God might have sent a new apostle every week in each of the twelve months of the year, and dictated a fresh Apocalypse for every library haunted by the meditative plodder, and for every theological school visited by the eager student. He had, unexpended and exhaustless, "the residue of the Spirit." With all this unused wealth behind him, he made the tome he would have man consult to be portable. Though, through centuries and across continents, its various materials were slowly carried together, they were found symmetric and consistent. The divine indenture tallied through the various ages of patriarch, prophet, and evangelist, in the unity of its temper and genius, and in the divine oneness of its lessons; yet, out of all these several and independent authorships, came a volume which a few pennies could buy, and which a week's study could read through from cover to cover. No lack of material was there in his omniscient and infinite wisdom; but lack of capacity in the scholar's mind and in the toiler's leisure rendered mercifully the book so compendious, yet incomparably comprehensive. It took hold of the child and the sage: the bar-

barian fresh from his cannibal-feast, and the philosopher gray and wrinkled from perusal of the Old World philosophies, found alike, in the one tome, what revealed their wound, and met their need, and unveiled their God. And, in the resurrection of that God, the Incarnate, sympathizing, suffering, atoning, and subduing—the Forerunner, Advocate, and Welcomer of all his flock—he stood, the ever-present Lord of the common household, and spread before the soul of each reader truths that might gladden and astonish and satisfy the intellect of an Edwards or a Pascal. A Bunyan, grimy from his tinkering, or when spent after filling up the stint of laces that was to win the wife's and children's bread, could catch, as the light came through prison-bars on the worn page, glimpses, bright and clear, of the Delectable Mountains and of the Heavenly City, as he prayed, wept, and pondered. And as the Holy Ghost, Creator, Enlightener, Restorer, Renewer, and Sanctifier, observed thus certain just rules, and made certain fit reserves, in his work for the first family, and again in his work on the divine Scriptures for the universal household of the faith,—so that same Divine Agent has his own reserves for the hour of his down-rush, and for the season of the uprising and forthbreaking of his earthly Zion. Pentecost did not exhaust his full effluences. The promises never grow stale.

When an impenitent and obdurate Judaism went down in the terrible siege of Titus; when an imperial and world-grasping Paganism of the proud Roman domination was stormed and was sapped and was exploded by the faith of the early Christian confessors, martyrs, and itiner-



ant missionaries, the grace, thus bestowed of Heaven, and thus witnessed on the face of the earth, left, in the Heavenly Paraclete, a store of all wisdom and all power and all goodness yet to be drawn upon by the generations to come after.

And so, in modern missions, when the wise of the world, and the worldly-wise in the nominal church, invited mankind to hoot at the absurdity, temerity, and ruinous revolutionary madness of going with a Bible and a Christ to men who had inherited a Paganism that was already old in the days of Daniel, or to other heathen, men who were wife-slayers, child-murderers, and devourers of human flesh; when the universities that called themselves Christian, and the governments that called their bills and laws by the years of the advent, and took oath in their law-courts on the record of pristine missionary activity and missionary triumph; when the Christian synods that deemed themselves inheritors of the work of the Reformers pronounced gravely and indignantly, that civilization must go in advance of evangelization, and that steam and gunpowder should shoot ahead of the Spirit of the living God to make his work feasible,—he who is wont “by the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are,” waited not for reviewers and East India Companies and Assemblies to settle, in their wise fashion, what were Jehovah’s prerogatives, and what might be in reason allowed him for their legitimate path of display. He came down. Out of the numerous and merry nursery-flock of a country pastor, he called the Wesleys; out of the tap-room of an inn kept by a widowed mother, he sum-



moned a Whitefield; out of the cradle of a parish-clerk, who was withal parish-schoolmaster, poor in store and narrow in hopes, he took a child; out of the cobbler's stall where that child learned an irksome trade, and learned it but imperfectly, he, the Able and the Unerring, brought a Carey. He sent the laborers, endued with grace and zeal and culture of his supplying, over the wide field; and the destitutions of home Paganism in Britain, and the vaster desolations of Indian Paganism in the ancient East, were met. Yes; incredible and preposterous as such providences seemed to the wise men, he left the gainsayers to piece together, as they best might, the fragments of their own exploded vaticinations; and to gather and hide, as they could, the blunted barbs of what they had deemed their irresistible wit. For the gospel, in spite of them, blazed out of the collier's mine, and out of the cottager's hut, and out of the homes which recent suttees had robbed of a mother. Civilization to precede Christianity? He who waits not for man proved, with a gracious and emphatic effusion of his Spirit, that when capitalists said: "Why, they have no funds;" and when scholars said: "Why, they have no learning;" and when rulers and parliamentary orators exclaimed: "Why they have no prudence; and if suffered, the empire has no security. Banish them, deport them, bridle them;" when clerical satirists exclaimed, giggling at the idea of being wiser than these egregious fanatics: "Choke them off, as you would the weasel found in your hen-roost,"—he, the Unwaiting, proved that he was in no mood to brook these interruptions. India, roused from the slumbers of weary

ages, heard, inquiringly and tolerantly, and at last gratefully, the men, poor but devout, who had heard, over the turmoil and prattle of colleges and parliament-houses and cabinet-halls and review-parlors, the still small voice which said: "Yet had he the residue of the Spirit."

Ay! The Jehovah who had commissioned the first writers was but awaiting the contrite and trustful and grateful readers. He "had that residue," and he meant to use it, let governors-general do their mightiest—let grave assemblies resolve to their own most sage self-content against its admissibility—let keen witlings sharpen their nibs and write down their most pungent gibes and their most oracular of predictions. The Father—had he not covenanted with the Son that the heathen should be the Christ's inheritance? The Son—had he not, after clutching the dragon and bearing Sin and rending Death as he mounted victoriously to his reascended and native skies, said to his flock—a few poor and sad men, earth-hunted and hell-hounded men as they were—"Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world"? So wait for the Spirit from the Father. And when the Paraclete, promised by Father and Son, comes down, where are the literatures—where the statesmanlike polities, however subtle and far-sighted—where the ancient and inveterate idolatries—where the philosophies, Gnostic, Eclectic, or Rationalistic, of whatever race, of whatever age,—that shall wrench away the urn which he is emptying out, and that shall beat back the descending torrents of the Spirit as he sends them on their mission of evangelization and enfranchisement? He gave the command, and great was

soon the company of those publishing the glad news. The world cried "Wait;" but when the Christ had said "Go," there were those—blessed be his name for the prompting and the heartening of them—who thought it better to hearken to God than to man—better to face the vast odds and to do the Christ-commanded task, in the Christ-covenanted strength. And now we challenge the world to pause from its rash presagings—presagings as fully and as shamefully falsified by to-day's history as have been the last year's prognostications told by some gypsies for stolen money to some credulous pilferer and blunderer, whom they cheated alike of funds and of hopes. We challenge the world to pause from its ill-omened threats of defeat for the Bible, and to answer honestly: Would they call back again the widows' burning piles which missionary zeal has quenched? Would they fling into the Ganges the babes whom missionary compassion and tenderness have persuaded the mother to spare? Would they call in the Bibles which these teachers have translated, and these converts have studied to their own spiritual renewal? Would they for the evangelized restore the paganized? No; from too many a shore and a tribe, insular and continental, comes back the testimony, It is God's work, and wondrous in our eyes. If his hand be in it, Gamaliel's counsel may be the most prudent; for who can fight against God?

And it is the recurrent testimony of ages, widely parted in the history of the nations and the churches, that when there has been strong prayer and simple faith, the secular aspect of the nations has been most strangely and sud-

denly altered. It is the intimation of the Old Testament and of the New, that where God's Spirit sends out his laborers, he also permits, in judgment and trial, the great Adversary often to awaken new zeal and to exhibit a fanatical energy in withstanding, maligning, and, if it may be, suppressing, the work and testimony of God. He who let loose the evil spirits and the false prophets on the Court and about the Cabinet of Ahab; he who launched, by a wise permission, the Sabeen and the Chaldean on Job,—may, in equal rightfulness and equal infallibility of purpose, let loose all the blasts of error and all the tempests of human enmity against the cause of his truth, his love, and his churches. But he means it only as he meant the successful enchantments of the Egyptians when Moses was preparing the Exodus; as he allowed the sons of Sceva to parody and rival the exorcisms of his own apostles. The Exodus lay behind the ineffectual resistance of Abaddon. The conversion of pagan Rome went on whilst Nero was beheading Paul, and whilst Domitian had pent up the last surviving apostle at Patmos. Error and Scandal, and false Philosophy and Science that would affect Materialism or Pantheism, and would bid us hold our Jehovah mute, till they have settled his right to speak—that would, very superciliously, bid us take our Immanuel out of the way, till their microscope and solar prism and telescope and crucible have fixed the rights of the world's Moulder and the world's Wielder and the world's Redeemer and the world's Judge to have a hearing,—all these may arise, may tower, and may threaten. But their right is that of Sanballat to hinder the building of the tem-

ple by Nehemiah. Opposition may tease, may require vigilance; but as to its inculcating despair, why should it do that in a world whose moral face Christianity has, by the confession of Infidels themselves, so wondrously altered? God does not prevent the battling of Hell against his Son's heavenly empire, but he does forbid that the churches should lose heart, as if the contest were any strange thing, and had found him unaware and unprovided.

We are to remember, again, that in the revulsions of the age changes occur, so sudden and so widespread, that the simplest Christian may well expect immense revolutions yet to break forth. It is in this line of recent precedents, as it is also in the line of very ancient predictions. A nation born in a day is an omen of the old Hebrew seer. It can be in our own time all the more easily credited. Would our fathers have believed Japan could be wrenched open, as in our days it is? On the face of Europe, what political alterations of the map have been witnessed by men here with locks not yet blanchèd by fifty years? On the face of Africa, how has exploration been pushed, boldly often, and in some cases as successfully as boldly? In Asia, how has the empire of Britain been threatened, and been restored? On our own continent, how recently did the interests of republican government seem trembling on the verge of possible revolution and social convulsion? Sudden and strange have been the deliverances.

But vast forces remain to be subdued, and it may to the secular thinker seem that the vast obstacles and enmities need to be eliminated. Take the parallel to the waste where Moses, the exile, is keeping sheep for his father-in-



law in Midian. Take it to the Christian church, returned from the burying of Stephen, and ask how they shall supply the vacancy thus cruelly made; and how they shall counteract the red-handed fanatic Saul, strong in the high priest's confidence, and intent in every region to secure fresh victims from Christ's fold. "Spent," but "charged." The dying prayers of a Jacob have not been obliterated from the heavenly registers; and Moses shall yet call down the ten plagues, marshal the twelve tribes, and head the Exodus. The prayers of Stephen to a Christ seen at the right hand of the Father are in remembrance; and on the way to fresh martyrdoms, God will strike down the raging wolf of the tribe of Benjamin, and transmute him into one of the leaders and watch-dog guardians of his own flock. Though as yet he rage against them, it is in God's purposes, that it shall be a flock multiplied by that converted persecutor's epistles, supplications, and appeals; by the wide circuit of his apostolate, and by the bright lustre of his heroic martyrdom. Do not fret because God is invisible, and requires your faith visible to be in him the Invisible. Do not impute your own pettiness and imbecility to the Almighty, who stretched the wide skies in their glory. "Yet has he the residue of the Spirit." Creation, Scripture, and providence—none of them have yet emptied him.

It is, again, a teaching of Holy Writ that the Divine Illuminator, although more gloriously and especially the Author of conversion and evangelization, is yet as well also the True Source of all mental illumination and advancement in the individual and the community. Arts



and discoveries and inventions are in the keeping of the Divine Paraclete. We suppose Watt, Franklin, Fulton, Stephenson, and Morse—each man who has benefited his race by some new glimpses into Science and some new application of its secrets in Art—has had, for this world, a mission and a helping that was from that higher world. How far the pathway of discovery and advancement in the material sciences may go, we cannot conjecture. But it is a principle of these oracles that from One Great Cause come the wise counsellor and the skilful worker. The agencies may be skeptical and atheistic as to their own personal creed, but the Almighty Father of lights can carry forward his work serenely over such opposition and athwart such instrumentalities, just as in those methods by which Elizabeth of England and her Cabinet penetrated and counterworked the alien plots that sought her life and the overthrow of her throne. All God's foes play, unconsciously, the part of spies in behalf of the very Ruler against whom they plot.

Above all, God's word bids the churches look to a higher degree of energy and sacred enterprise, as it shall be developed in individual believers or entire communities in the favored generations of our race. "The feeble shall be as David, and David as the angel of God."\* It is not so much a multiplication of the host as a renewed descent of the sevenfold energies of the Holy Ghost upon the warriors. What the amount of the residue which God has in the forces that he is yet to draw upon, we may infer from the width of his covenant; it takes in all lands.

\* Zech. xii. 8.

We may infer it from the merits of the Atoning Victim; he is "the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot." We may argue it from the breadth of the Satanic sway; all adverse power, however old, vast, and deeply rooted, is to feel the overbearing energies of the God who has consecrated the planet to the reward of his own Descending and Incarnated and Self-sacrificing Son.

The great secret of Nelson's success at sea and of Napoleon's victories on the land was the turning of one point of irresistible and overbearing force on the weaker centre of the lines of the antagonist. Now, God is the mightiest, whatever the point in the great array of Earth's errors and idolatries and infidelities which he may choose to assail. He were not a champion adequate to win rightfully and wear justly the title of King of saints if he were not fully armed with the skill and the power, in this garnered reserved force, this residue Spirit, to choose well the point of onset, to abide well in sovereign patience the musterings and the vauntings of the foes. "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Paine vaunted that he had hewn down the trees of Scripture; priests might plant them, but they would not grow again. Volney wrote his *Ruins*. In their original France, and in Catholic Spain, and in English India, and in South America, the nominally Catholic, how assiduously has the work been circulated. Strauss was hailed, how jubilantly. Renan, with all his grace of lore and style, has uttered his voice. But from any of these latter, can we expect a more vigorous or enduring resistance than came from the

Bolingbrokes, the Tyndals and the Humes, the Voltaires and the Diderots, many of these last, intellectually, not only the peers, but far the superiors, of the more recent opponents? No; the line is to be drawn long, and closely serried. But in the centre, foreseen from the eternities—in its very seat of defiance and audacity—it is to be pierced by the “reserved forces” of this Spirit. And the line broken, as in Trafalgar or in Waterloo, the rout will be speedy and irretrievable. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The stars in their courses fight for our Redeemer, and, like that light which flamed over his Bethlehem manger, are all loyal to the Captain of our salvation. On the side of man’s weakness and vast responsibilities, there is much to appal in the motto of Wren’s sun-dial: “Spent, but charged.” But there is a glad and bright side, when Faith looks away from man to man’s Maker and Helper. The gospel presents a Saviour of infinite sufficiency and competency and worthiness. The blood of his cross has a perpetuity of influence, outspreading itself from the past to the yet future eternity, and, like its Divine Shedder, “from everlasting to everlasting.” In the purpose of the Father, surveying the certainty of its flow and the efficacy of its grace, it is that of the Lamb of God slain from before the foundation of the world. His merits exhaustless and his sympathies constant and infinite, his people look to his blood once shed, his priesthood once taken up and ever prevalent, his omnipresence flooding our divisions and insufficiencies, and they cry in that aspect, “Spent,” freely and divinely, his redeeming strength and righteousness, and

“charged.” The Father eyes it, the Spirit follows it, the Son administers it. Providence is in his controlling, guiding grasp. The last retributions of the last day are dispensed by this Elder Brother, laden with our sorrows, bearing our sins, and charged with the needs, the hopes, and the prayers of his people. Because he lives they also live, not only to subdue the world, but to inherit Paradise. Zion’s destinies are embedded into the throne of God, and knitted into the heart of Christ.

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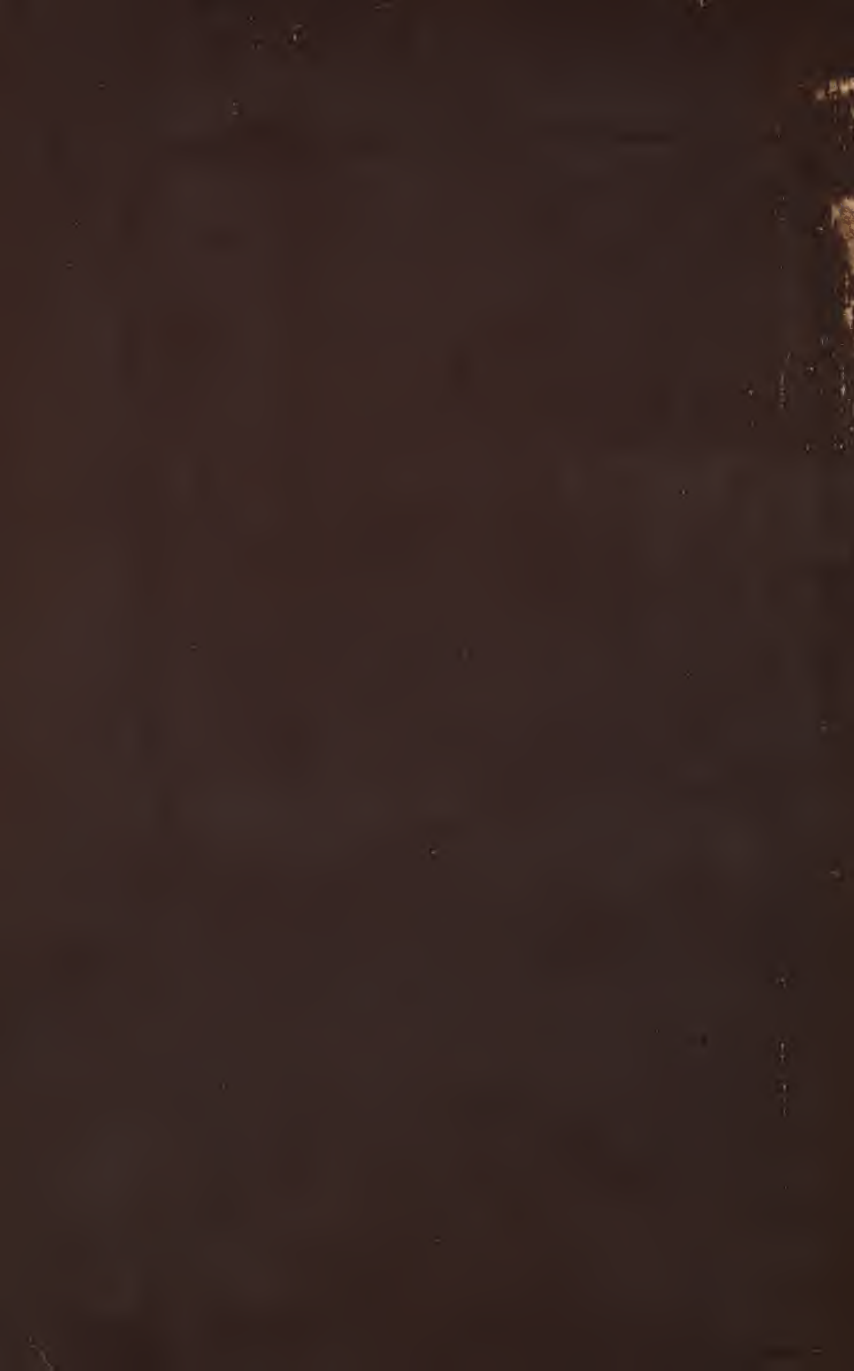
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